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<i>President:</i>	Mr. Menan	(Togo)
<i>Members:</i>	Azerbaijan	Mr. Musayev
	China	Miss He Fen
	Colombia	Mr. Quintana
	France	Mr. Cabouat
	Germany	Mrs. Fries-Gaier
	Guatemala	Ms. Taracena Secaira
	India	Mr. Amit Kumar
	Morocco	Mr. El Mkhantar
	Pakistan	Mr. Tarar
	Portugal	Ms. Vaz Patto
	Russian Federation	Mr. Repkov
	South Africa	Mr. Crowley
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mrs. Stevens
	United States of America	Mr. Donegan

Agenda

Women and peace and security

Report of the Secretary-General on conflict-related sexual violence (S/2012/33)

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The meeting resumed at 3.05 p.m.

The President (*spoke in French*): I wish to remind all speakers to limit their statements to no more than four minutes in order to enable the Council to carry out its work expeditiously.

I now give the floor to the representative of Egypt.

Mr. Abdelaziz (Egypt): At the outset, allow me to express our sincere appreciation for your initiative, Mr. President, in convening the meeting today. Our appreciation also goes to Ms. Margot Wallström, Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict, and Mr. Hervé Ladsous, Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, for their comprehensive presentations today.

The report of the Secretary-General on conflict-related sexual violence (S/2012/33) that has been introduced today by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict highlights progress achieved in monitoring, analysis and reporting activities aimed at addressing sexual violence against women in conflict and post-conflict situations, including the important role of women's protection advisers in that context, and provides information on parties to conflict credibly suspected of committing or being responsible for acts of sexual violence, in relation to the implementation of Security Council resolution 1960 (2010) on sexual violence in situations of armed conflict.

In that regard, Egypt would like to express its appreciation for the efforts exerted by Ms. Wallström and her team in preparing the report in consultation with concerned Member States. However, Egypt believes that the inclusion of section IV.B, entitled "Sexual violence in the context of elections, political strife and civil unrest", to the report of the Secretary-General falls far beyond the mandate of the Special Representative to implement resolution 1960 (2010) which, in paragraph 8,

"Requests the Secretary General to establish monitoring, analysis and reporting arrangements on conflict-related sexual violence, including rape in situations of armed conflict and post-conflict and other situations relevant to the implementation of resolution 1888 (2009), as appropriate, and taking into account the specificity of each country".

As resolution 1888 (2009) focuses mainly on situations of particular concern with respect to sexual violence in situations of armed conflict, the inclusion of section IV.B in the report, in our view, constitutes an unjustified widening of the scope of activities of the Special Representative without a proper mandate from the Security Council.

Despite the spirit of openness and transparency that characterized Egyptian foreign policy after the revolution of 25 January 2011, Egypt does not see any reason whatsoever for its inclusion for the first time in the new and innovative section IV.B of the report, which mixes conflict-related with non-conflict-related sexual violence.

Notwithstanding the extensive consultations between my delegation and the Special Representative on paragraphs 80 to 82 of the report, it is important to stress once again that our engagement in those negotiations cannot be construed as acceptance of the addition of the new section, and to stress yet again that the current situation in Egypt cannot in any way be characterized as armed conflict. Thus, Egypt cannot be dealt with on equal footing with other States mentioned in the innovative section IV.B of the report, where a conflict exists and widespread systematic documented sexual violence has been committed against women.

What is more shocking is the major discrepancy in section IV.B, comparing a peaceful revolution in Egypt — where a single isolated incident is under court-martial consideration — with the grave situation in Syria, which has witnessed and is still witnessing an armed conflict in which military forces are involved in a conflict situation with opposition armed groups, according to the Syrian Government itself. Nor can this single, isolated incident in Egypt be equated with events in other countries mentioned in the same section of the report, such as that referred to in paragraph 84, where "two years after the violence, not a single perpetrator has been convicted", and another referred to in paragraph 85, where "a total of 1,500 cases were documented, although the exact number was estimated to have been higher".

While reiterating our appreciation to Ms. Wallström for the openness and flexibility shown during the consultations with the mission of Egypt on this issue, which resulted in the inclusion of some of our views in the report — particularly those related to the decision of the Supreme Council of Armed Forces

to tighten the penalty for crimes of sexual harassment, abduction and rape — other Egyptian proposals have not found their way into the report. The allegations of virginity tests in paragraph 81 have been extensively investigated by the Egyptian military authorities and the suspected doctor is being tried before the supreme military court, reflecting Egypt's strong belief in the rule of law and zero tolerance towards any violation, foremost among which is any sexual-related violation. This in itself should have provided the justification for not mentioning Egypt at all in the report, particularly as this incident and the way it has been handled represent no systematic practice in this regard.

Egypt is cruising on a smooth democratic transition towards the fulfilment of the Egyptian people's aspirations to the rule of law, justice and human rights in a context of full accountability and non-impunity. Moreover, most of the other incidents cited in paragraph 81 of the report occurred during the troubled last days of the former regime. All of them have been investigated and the perpetrators are currently on trial, starting with the former President himself down to any perpetrator of any violation of the rights of the men and women of our country. Therefore, I assert once again that there is no ground to substantiate the inclusion of Egypt in the current report or in any future report of the Secretary-General to the Security Council on this matter.

Due regard should be given to the influential role played by Egyptian women in the 25 January revolution, which in itself was a clear manifestation of their active participation in the transformation process within Egyptian society. In the same vein, Egypt reiterates its full commitment to all international legal instruments and protocols on the rights of women, and to furthering Egyptian women's contribution in all public domains and preserving the gains they have made over decades.

I conclude by reiterating Egypt's strong commitment to the promotion and protection of all women's rights, and by urging all United Nations mandate holders — in this, case the Special Representative on Sexual Violence in Conflict — to perform their functions in strict observance of their mandates, upholding the principles of impartiality, objectivity and non-selectivity.

The President (*spoke in French*): I call on the representative of Australia.

Ms. King (Australia): I thank you, Mr. President, for convening this important debate. We very much appreciate your initiative, as well as the briefings we received this morning. In the two and a half years since the Council committed to taking more effective action to prevent and address sexual violence in conflict, we have witnessed a significant number of United Nations actions designed to turn rhetoric into action. The work of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict has been integral to this effort. The landmark adoption of resolution 1960 (2010) 12 months ago demonstrated the Council's willingness to take measures to end the scourge of sexual violence in conflict. It is critical that the Council and Member States implement resolution 1960 (2010) fully.

Australia strongly supports the work of the Special Representative, particularly the increasing use of field visits and direct engagement with parties to conflict. We encourage the Council to receive regular briefings from the Special Representative when she considers issues related to sexual violence to be relevant to its deliberations. That would help the Council to undertake its preventive role.

We know that conflict situations are usually characterized by the breakdown of law and order. The impunity that can prevail in such situations has a particularly devastating impact on the victims of sexual violence. Accountability for crimes of sexual violence is critical to changing behaviours. The increased engagement of the Council with the parties listed in the Secretary-General's report (S/2012/33) is an important element in developing such cultures of accountability, as is the consideration by sanctions committees of targeted and graduated measures against persistent perpetrators of violence.

We encourage the Council to remain seized of the need to deploy women protection advisers to peacekeeping and special political missions. The inclusion of relevant information in country-specific reports and in mission mandates must also be considered. We also join South Africa in encouraging the inclusion of more women as uniformed personnel in peacekeeping operations, and welcome India's statement today that it is willing to increase its own contribution in this regard.

We welcome the recent deployments of the Team of Experts on the Rule of Law and Sexual Violence in

Conflict. South Sudan's use of this expertise to guide the planning of its justice system should be particularly welcomed. Integrating the voices of women into design will better ensure gender-responsive justice systems.

Over the past two and a half years, we have witnessed a renewed dedication by the United Nations, as well as troop- and police-contributing countries, to developing and implementing tools to prevent and address sexual violence, consistent with their mandate to protect civilians. The rollout through scenario-based training for peacekeepers of the United Nations toolkit to address conflict-related sexual violence was an important development, and Australia was pleased to fund it. We encourage troop- and police-contributing countries to integrate this tool into predeployment training.

Security sector reform must address conflict-related sexual violence. The development of human rights training tools for security officials will help to extend these efforts to detention and interrogation facilities, which are often beyond the reach of peacekeeping missions. Australia is also pleased to be working with the Department of Political Affairs and UN-Women to support women's engagement in decision-making on security sector reform.

Separately, we have supported the development of a victim management programme for Pacific police, and developed police manuals on gender-based violence in Timor-Leste. The Australian Federal Police is also formulating a police development strategy and toolkit that include a focus on gender and conflict-related issues, which will assist our police who are working with international partners to address conflict-related sexual violence.

Australia continues to build on its work to implement Resolution 1325 (2000). We are consulting closely with civil society to develop the first Australian national action plan on women, which includes work to protect the human rights of women and girls affected by conflict, particularly in relation to sexual violence. Last year, we appointed a global ambassador for women and girls, and the protection of women and girls in conflict zones is a core component of the ambassador's mandate.

We look forward to the Secretary-General's next report outlining recommendations for advocacy and action to be made by the United Nations joint

consultation forum. The momentum of the past two years must be harnessed for further action and results.

The President (*spoke in French*): I give the floor to the representative of Viet Nam.

Mr. Le Hoai Trung (Viet Nam): Let me start by expressing our appreciation to you, Sir, for convening this open debate on women and peace and security. I would also like to thank Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon for his comprehensive report (S/2012/33), and his Special Representative on Sexual Violence in Conflict, Ms. Margot Wallström, for briefing us on this important issue.

War has always impacted men and women differently, but probably never more so than in modern armed conflicts. In recent armed conflicts, women and girls have been disproportionately targeted and constituted the majority of victims. They are also more vulnerable to all forms of violence, in particular sexual violence and exploitation. The report of the Secretary-General has shown the dire plight of many women and girls and what can be done to alleviate some of these injustices. Viet Nam supports many of the recommendations contained in the Secretary-General's report, as well as many views expressed during this debate. As a country that has experience in dealing with the consequences of wars and as the main sponsor of resolution 1889 (2009), on women, peace and security, Viet Nam would like to underline the following.

First, although the international efforts in promoting the implementation of the women, peace and security resolutions 1325 (2000) 1820 (2008), 1888 (2009) and 1960 (2010) have achieved meaningful progress, challenges still remain. Viet Nam is of the view that the diverse nature of violence against women and girls requires a comprehensive approach. The United Nations therefore plays an important role in coordinating with Member States, relevant United Nations bodies, especially UN-Women, civil society and other stakeholders, in promoting the recognition and integration of women in the area of peace and security and in intensifying international efforts to end sexual violence against women and girls in a coherent manner and with gender sensitivity.

Secondly, stopping sexual violence against women in armed conflict is closely linked with women's empowerment and gender equality. Only when women can play a full and equal part in peace,

conflict resolution and post-conflict processes can we build the foundation for international peace and security. Measures to protect women and girls from sexual violence in conflict situations should be designed as part of a broader comprehensive framework that covers social, economic and development issues. It is important that gender equality should be incorporated into all levels and stages of policymaking, reconciliation, negotiation, the management of humanitarian aid and post-conflict planning. Responding to the needs of women and girls with regard to physical security, health services, ways to ensure their livelihoods, land and property rights and employment will create favourable preconditions for the coherent and long-term implementation of necessary measures.

Thirdly, we believe that United Nations bodies and donors should work in a coordinated and coherent manner to assist national Governments in building gender-related capacity in addressing the security, recovery and development needs of women and girls in post-conflict situations. The international community should also enhance its assistance to poor countries and countries affected by conflicts to accelerate economic and social development and improve people's livelihoods, which can help to prevent conflicts at the source and lay the foundation for enduring peace and security.

On this occasion, View Nam would like to reaffirm our strong commitment to working with the international community to effectively end sexual violence and promote the rights of women and girls.

The President (*spoke in French*): I now give the floor to Mr. Thomas Mayr-Harting, Head of the Delegation of the European Union to the United Nations.

Mr. Mayr-Harting: I speak on behalf of the European Union (EU) and its member States. The acceding country Croatia, the candidate countries the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Montenegro, the countries of the Stabilization and Association Process and potential candidates Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia, as well as Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova and Armenia, align themselves with this declaration.

I first wish to thank the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict, Ms. Margot Wallström, as well as Mr. Hervé Ladsous

and Ms. Amina Megheirbi, as the civil society representative, for their statements.

Sexual violence in armed conflict remains alarmingly widespread. It includes instances of systematic targeting of civilians by armed forces and groups, with the aim to destroy and humiliate. It is a crime and a serious violation of human rights that remains underreported — due to stigmatization, the possibility of reprisal and the perception that justice and aid would be hard or unlikely to come by.

We therefore welcome the report (S/2012/33) of the Secretary-General and the work of Special Representative Wallström on the implementation of the Security Council resolutions on women, peace and security.

The establishment of the monitoring, analysis and reporting arrangements on conflict-related sexual violence has made an important contribution towards more systematic and detailed information flow to the Council. We especially appreciate the information provided on parties to armed conflict credibly suspected of committing, or being responsible for, acts of rape or other forms of sexual violence, as well as the list of parties annexed to the report. The systematic collection of accurate, reliable and objective information is a crucial basis for timely action to prevent and respond to conflict-related sexual violence.

We commend the coordination and cooperation envisioned in the implementation of those arrangements with the relevant parts of the United Nations system, including the monitoring and reporting mechanism on children and armed conflict, the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and the human rights components of the United Nations peacekeeping missions. We welcome the finalization of the terms of reference of the women's protection advisers and call for their swift designation within the United Nations missions' human rights and gender components. Preventing sexual violence should be our utmost priority. We therefore welcome the development of early warning indicators specific to conflict-related sexual violence and the scenario based predeployment training modules by the United Nations system, which we hope will enhance the capacity of the peacekeepers to respond. A holistic approach that includes women's full participation in decision-making in peace and security is key to effectively preventing and responding to sexual violence.

It is crucial to sustained peace and development that we address impunity for sexual violence. It is the duty of all States to investigate and prosecute those crimes. We commend the efforts of the Team of Experts on the Rule of Law, including their support to countries in ending impunity — for example, through assistance to prosecution support cells established by the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the deployment of female magistrates in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. We also encourage the Council to use all means at its disposal to end impunity for sexual violence in conflict, including through referrals to International Criminal Court, mandating commissions of inquiry and by explicitly condemning such violations.

We call on the Council to continue to make use of the monitoring, analysis and reporting arrangements on conflict-related sexual violence, including by using the list contained in the report, as a basis for more focused United Nations engagement with the parties listed, including, as appropriate, measures in accordance with the procedures of the relevant sanctions committees. We hope that the Secretary-General's report will also encourage the inclusion of additional information in relevant country-specific reports and consistent reporting across different country situations.

Finally, the European Union continues to implement its dedicated policy on women, peace and security, adopted in 2008, making use of tools as diverse as development cooperation, the Common Security and Defence Policy and political dialogue. The varied EU support to initiatives related to women, peace and security amounts to approximately €200 million per year.

The European Union now has gender advisers or focal points in each of its crisis management missions around the world. We continue our work on specific training modules on human rights and gender in crisis-management, ensuring a focus on sexual violence in armed conflicts.

The EU continues to work closely with the United Nations — for example, through its support to UN-Women in carrying out the project “Women Connect across Conflicts”, which is aimed at building accountability for the implementation of the Council's relevant resolutions.

The European Union and its member States highly appreciate the work of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict, as well as that of the Team of Experts on the Rule of Law and Sexual Violence in Conflict. We will continue to engage with the Office of the Special Representative and welcome its contribution to strengthening the efforts of the United Nations, Member States and all actors involved in preventing and responding to conflict-related sexual violence.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Brazil.

Mrs. Dunlop (Brazil): Mr. President, I congratulate you on having convened this important debate. I am also grateful to Ms. Wallström for her presentation. Her invaluable work on the issue has been crucial in helping the Council to address the scourge of sexual violence. I also thank Under-Secretary-General Hervé Ladsous for his remarks.

We have come a long way since the adoption of resolution 1820 (2008). The development of an important body of norms and tools has enhanced the international community's capacity to resolutely respond to sexual violence in armed conflict.

We welcome the progress made on the development of the monitoring, analysis and reporting arrangements. For those arrangements to be effective, it is essential that they have the support of the broader United Nations membership and not only of the Security Council. To that end, Brazil encourages Ms. Wallström to engage in a dialogue with Member States and regional groups, with a view to both clarifying how the arrangements will work and exchanging views on how they can best operate.

The presence of women's protection advisers in peacekeeping operations will constitute a very helpful tool in the efforts to make the fight against sexual violence a mission-wide endeavour. However, prevention will be effective only if peacekeeping operations have the resources they need to implement their mandate. In that regard, we commend the improvements made in predeployment training, which are of crucial importance to preparing peacekeepers to carry out this critical task.

The signing last December of a letter of intent between the Brazilian Ministry of Defence and UN-Women, aimed at consolidating their existing

partnership, will contribute to ensuring more comprehensive training for our peacekeepers, including in preventing and addressing conflict-related sexual violence.

Making real progress in our efforts against sexual violence in armed conflict requires greater emphasis on prevention and capacity-building. The only way to ensure that the progress achieved during the presence of a peacekeeping mission is sustainable is by working with national Governments to address their needs in the areas of institution-building, the training of personnel, supporting victims and strengthening the rule of law.

We very much appreciate the work that has been done by the Team of Experts on Sexual Violence and the support it has been providing to Member States in strengthening their institutions. It is somewhat surprising that such crucial work is financed exclusively by voluntary contributions.

Real change requires an integrated approach that combines prevention, the fight against impunity and support for victims. The United Nations needs to be prepared to support capacity-building and institutional strengthening as a system-wide priority if we want prevention to be effective and the scourge of sexual violence in armed conflict to be eliminated.

The President (*spoke in French*): I now give the floor to the representative of Switzerland.

Mr. Guerber (Switzerland): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the Human Security Network, namely, Austria, Chile, Costa Rica, Greece, Ireland, Jordan, Mali, Norway, Panama, Slovenia, Thailand, South Africa as an observer, and my own country, Switzerland.

We would like to thank the Togolese presidency for having convened this important open debate on women, peace and security, an issue that is at the core of the Human Security Network.

Let us further thank the Secretary-General for his report and his Special Representative on Sexual Violence in Conflict, Ms. Margot Wallström, for her outstanding work and commitment to this sensitive and complex issue. The Human Security Network shares the views expressed by the Secretary-General in his recommendations to the Security Council, Member States, donors and regional organizations.

Since the adoption of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000), we have witnessed significant advances in this field, including resolutions 1820 (2008), 1888 (2009) and 1960 (2010), the creation of the post of the Special Representative on Sexual Violence in Conflict, as well as the Team of Experts on the Rule of Law and Sexual Violence in Conflict, which contribute significantly to strengthening the cooperation between the United Nations system and Member States in order to prevent crimes against women and girls. In addition, they help to improve the efficiency of the national judicial systems in ensuring the rule of law and bringing perpetrators to justice, including to the International Criminal Court.

However, it is deeply disturbing that today we continue to witness rapes of women, girls and children in general, in countries in armed conflict but also in other situations, including post-conflict situations. We recognize the efforts made by some Governments to put an end to these crimes, to strengthen judicial systems and to bring those responsible to justice. However, as the Secretary-General's report (S/2012/33) shows, progress remains slow, and in practice the perpetrators of crimes against women and girls often go unpunished.

The Human Security Network therefore urges Member States to increase their efforts to prevent conflict-related sexual violence by undertaking all necessary efforts to implement all applicable legal provisions in the matter. The primary responsibility is theirs. But, at the same time, this constitutes a challenge for the international community as a whole, especially for regional and subregional organizations. Their role in supporting the efforts of those countries is crucial. The message must be clear; there shall be no impunity for the perpetrators of such crimes, and the countries affected and the international community will not rest until there is accountability and justice is done.

The provision of genuine support, protection and the relevant services to the victims and their families is equally as important as rendering justice. In that context, the support given at the community level is vital. Projects that directly assist victims and their families to help them overcome the trauma inflicted upon them are of particularly great value.

One of the key issues in a post-conflict country is security sector reform. Security is not a "men's issue"; it is a gender issue, and women must be involved in all

relevant discussions and negotiations from their inception, and they must also be part of the higher military ranks, which is where security-related issues are usually discussed. The gender perspective must be part of the reform and training of all security forces.

The Human Security Network emphasizes the importance of the full and equal participation of women in political processes, including in peacemaking and peacebuilding. Their involvement ensures the success of those processes. At the same time, conflict-related sexual violence and the specific needs of women and girls have to be addressed adequately, both in ceasefire agreements and in peace agreements.

Preventing crimes is as crucial as delivering justice and supporting the victims. To that end, we have to be able to improve the early warning systems and monitoring mechanisms already in place and to build upon them where needed. They must be capable of detecting signs of possible crimes and must mobilize the political and judicial authorities in order to prevent them. They must involve all relevant levels, from the community level to the provincial and national levels. Regional organizations can also play an important role in the creation of an efficient early warning system.

Finally, we appreciate the information provided on the progress made in implementing the monitoring, analysis and reporting arrangements. The collection of timely, accurate, reliable and objective information on conflict-related sexual violence is crucial to tailoring the Council's responses, as well as to enhancing action to prevent sexual violence. We also wish to encourage the deployment of women protection advisers to United Nations peacekeeping and special political missions in order to strengthen the response of the relevant mission components to conflict-related sexual violence.

We strongly hope that the Council will be able to reach an agreement on the presidential statement later today.

(spoke in French)

I will now make a statement in my national capacity. A more detailed version of my statement can be found in the distributed text.

Resolutions 1888 (2009) and 1960 (2010) on women and peace and security constitute a robust machinery, which demonstrates that the Security Council and United Nations members are firmly

resolved to move from advocacy to the effective implementation of their commitment to combat conflict-related sexual violence. The establishment of new mandates always raises the crucial issue of coordination and the efficient use of existing structures.

We welcome the fact that it is intended to preserve the full flexibility of the monitoring, analysis and reporting arrangements in order to adapt them to the country-specific needs and circumstances. In that regard, we would like to underscore the importance of the continued and transparent communication of the Office of the Special Representative with United Nations country teams so as to foster ownership and results-oriented implementation of the new structures and processes in the field.

We note with great satisfaction that several activities have been launched with UN-Women. We hope that such productive cooperation will continue. Switzerland recently contributed 3 million Swiss francs to the United Nations Trust Fund to End Violence against Women, which is administered by UN-Women.

The Secretary-General's report on conflict-related sexual violence contains useful recommendations to the Security Council, Member States and regional organizations. I would like to recall three of those, in particular.

First, prevention is a priority as it is an essential part of our efforts to protect, in which many stakeholders have a role to play. Specific and time-bound commitments to put an end to all acts of sexual violence and to bring their perpetrators to justice can help to break the cycle of violence.

We strongly support more systematic measures to enhance protection against sexual violence and prevention of its recurrence through transitional justice mechanisms. Such measures should link the fight against impunity and recognition of victims' rights, for example through appropriate reparations, but also include strengthening the national capacity to combat the causes of violence and, at the same time, to prevent new cases.

Secondly, in resolution 1820 (2008), the Security Council resolved to take acts of sexual violence into consideration when establishing or renewing State-specific sanctions regimes. That opportunity should not be forgotten. It thus provides the means to take

targeted measures against, for example, the parties and individuals mentioned in the Secretary-General's report on sexual violence in conflict.

Finally, in his report, the Secretary-General calls on the parties to include training on conflict-related sexual violence in training programmes for peacekeeping troops. In that regard, I would like to draw the Council's attention to the handbook prepared by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, entitled "Standardized Best Practices Toolkit on Gender and Policing in Peacekeeping Operations". The handbook was co-financed by Switzerland.

The structures set up by resolutions 1888 (2009), 1889 (2009) and 1960 (2010) are still in a testing phase, and only proof of the reality will make it possible to assess their effectiveness. The path is steep and rocky. However, we should move forward prudently and resolutely in strengthening the protection architecture. The establishment of the mandate of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict is a significant part of that course.

The President (*spoke in French*): I give the floor to the representative of Liechtenstein.

Mr. Sparber (Liechtenstein): At the outset, let me join others in welcoming the report of the Secretary-General on conflict-related sexual violence (S/2012/33). For the first time, it informs us of the dire situation regarding the use of sexual violence as a method of warfare in country-specific situations. Let me also welcome the dedication with which the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict, Ms. Margot Wallström, and her team have operationalized and implemented important obligations deriving from resolutions 1820 (2008), 1888 (2009) and 1960 (2010). We are pleased to see that the monitoring, analysis and reporting arrangements on conflict-related sexual violence are now included in the mandates of various United Nations missions and that the terms of reference of women protection advisers have been agreed upon.

Sexual violence is used not only as a method of warfare during armed conflict, but also as a means to surreptitiously continue conflict after the guns have fallen silent. Sexual violence can be an important indicator in determining when conflicts might turn violent or when a conflict relapses into violence. To fulfil its mandate towards conflict prevention, it is

therefore imperative that the Council continue to receive information on sexual violence, including on situations of concern that are not on its agenda.

Sexual violence not only attacks the dignity and the body of the victim, but also tears at the fundamental social fabric of the community. To build sustainable peace, sexual violence must be addressed throughout all stages of conflict resolution processes, starting with ceasefire agreements and the presence of adequate gender expertise at the peace table. When provisions on sexual violence are not part of ceasefire agreements, such violence can be used, in effect, to continue acts of war, thereby undermining efforts to reduce violence and leading to a cycle of vengeance.

Moreover, research shows that when sexual violence is not addressed in the early stages of mediation efforts, the issue is likely to be ignored throughout later efforts to create and maintain peace. Hence, we welcome the work of the Department of Political Affairs to produce guidance for mediators on addressing conflict-related sexual violence in mediation processes and throughout conflict resolution efforts. In that context, it is worthwhile recalling that United Nations-endorsed peace agreements can never promise amnesties for genocide, war crimes, crimes against humanity or gross violations of human rights.

The Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (ICC) has significantly advanced international law by including sexual violence in the definition of crimes, in particular, as a crime against humanity. The ICC therefore represents an important mechanism in the fight against conflict-related sexual violence. We call on the Council to use all means at its disposal to strengthen the fight against impunity for those violations by making better use of targeted measures, including sanctions and referrals to the ICC. In addition to collecting information on trends and perpetrators of conflict-related sexual violence, we must simultaneously ensure that support services for victims are sufficiently funded.

My delegation has therefore pledged to continue its financial support for the ICC Trust Fund for Victims, which adopts a gender-based perspective across all programmes and specifically aims to assist victims of all forms of sexual and gender-based violence. The Trust Fund provides direct assistance to victims, and thus has an immediate impact on the ground.

As a member of the group of five small States, my delegation is a long-standing supporter of the consistent mainstreaming of the Council's thematic agenda into its country-specific work. To support the Council's efforts in mainstreaming its thematic agenda on women, peace and security, my delegation organized a workshop, from 28 to 30 January in Schaan, Liechtenstein, hosted by Foreign Minister Aurelia Frick, on the implementation of the women, peace and security agenda in Afghanistan. The workshop was organized in close partnership with the Liechtenstein Institute on Self-Determination at Princeton University, and was supported by the delegations of Afghanistan and Germany.

Since the findings and recommendations are related to today's consideration, allow me to remind the Council of the outcome report of the workshop. We believe that the inclusion of some of the recommendations within the renewed mandate of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan would lead to an increased participation of women in peace processes, as well as more reliable information with regard to the work of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict.

The President (*spoke in French*): I give the floor to the representative of Israel.

Mr. Prozor (Israel): Mr. President, let me begin by thanking you personally for your stewardship of the Security Council this month and for holding this very important debate.

Today's discussion is about our collective responsibility to give voice to the voiceless. An increasing number of conflicts around the world are made even more horrific by the use of sexual violence. These are often the most disturbing and the most hidden elements of conflict. Yet, the number of victims is staggering, and it continues to grow every day. Each one of these people has a name and has a family.

The victims are women like Honorata, a young mother from the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo, who was held for nearly a year by armed militias and raped daily in captivity. After Honorata escaped, the stigma of her rape caused her family to reject her, leaving her alone and impoverished.

The victims are women like Layla, a teenager from Iran who was detained for two months during the

country's protests in 2009. In a report last year on the PBS television channel, Layla described her treatment by the Iranian authorities. She said, "When they were raping and torturing me, and putting out cigarettes on my body, nobody knew... Death was a desire for me. I wanted to die".

Testimonies like Layla's remind us that the systematic use of sexual violence is often the calling card of the most brutal regimes and militias in the world. State-sponsored rape has served as a primary tool of dictators from Al-Qadhafi in Libya, Al-Assad in Syria to the ayatollahs of Iran. Armed groups in Africa — from the Democratic Republic of the Congo to Somalia — are using sexual violence to spread terror, instil fear and shatter lives. These tyrants, those warlords and criminals know that they leave scars not just on individual victims, but on families and communities.

Major General Patrick Cammaert, the former Commander of United Nations peacekeeping forces in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo said:

"Rape is an extremely cheap weapon, but has vast and far-reaching effects. With the single weapon of rape, soldiers and militants can disrupt and destroy the fabric of society. Rape sows fear; it spreads sexually transmitted disease. It excludes women from participation in civic life."

In the year since the Security Council adopted resolution 1960 (2010), the instances of sexual violence have only increased. We must act with common purpose in the face of these atrocities. We must have zero tolerance for the use of sexual violence as a weapon of war. Israel was a proud to sponsor of resolution 1960 (2010) and the previous resolutions on women and peace and security. It is time for the international community to breathe life into the words contained in these resolutions with concrete actions on the ground.

The Secretary-General's report (S/2012/33) offers clear guidance on important steps that the international community must take. For instance, operationally, those listed in the annex of these reports should face additional measures from the Security Council sanctions committees. Israel also strongly supports the recommendation to include provisions for conflict-related sexual violence in ceasefire and peace agreements.

Women have a vital role to play in preventing sexual violence, which is why we must increase their roles in peacekeeping forces, negotiation teams and other relevant bodies. Israel shares the serious concern of many others about the allegations of sexual violence by peacekeepers in Haiti over the past year. Such allegations highlight the important role that women protection advisers play in such contingents.

Today, I would like to commend the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict, Ms. Wallström, and her whole team, sitting here, for the valuable work that they continue to carry out, such as developing early warning indicators for sexual violence in conflicts. It is clear that such work advances the international community's ability to understand the threat of sexual violence and to respond more effectively.

Every fall, during our holiest of days, the Jewish people pray, "May all humankind become one single family". It is in that spirit that we must pursue this pressing issue. The imperative to prevent sexual violence extends beyond politics, religion or geography. It stands at the core of our common humanity and the guiding mission of this Council. Together, we must do our utmost to heal the victims, protect the innocent and punish those who carry out this evil. As a family of nations, we must stand shoulder to shoulder to defend each person from sexual violence, as if he or she were members of our own family.

The President (*spoke in French*): I give the floor to the representative of Indonesia.

Mr. Khan (Indonesia): At the outset, I would like to extend my appreciation to you, Sir, for convening this open debate on women and peace and security. The focus of this debate on the implementation of resolution 1960 (2010) is both necessary and important. It is also a clear demonstration of the general commitment to protecting women from sexual violence in armed conflict. I also would like to join others in thanking all the speakers today for their respective briefings. We appreciate the information provided by the Secretary-General's report (S/2012/33), which has been helpful in indicating to us the extent of the problem. That information will help to guide and enhance the fruitfulness of our debate.

Indonesia strongly deplores all forms of violence, including sexual violence in armed conflict, committed

against women. Women must be free to live their lives without having to face the threat of violence, sexual or otherwise. We note with deep concern the fact that while the Security Council resolutions related to women and peace and security have served to highlight the problem and force action aimed at its elimination, the violations persist. We have every reason to speedily implement resolution 1960 (2010). But this must be done in keeping within the spirit of resolution 1325 (2000), which addresses all aspects of women in conflict and post-conflict situations in a more comprehensive manner.

We are informed by the Secretary-General's report that over the past year, there have been several new and ongoing armed conflicts in which sexual violence has been widespread, with civilian populations being systematically targeted. What is even more disturbing is the fact that most perpetrators remain at large. Indonesia finds this unfortunate situation unacceptable. All action must therefore be directed at eliminating the conditions that give rise to and sustain such behaviour.

The need for determined action is clear. It would be to our benefit if we were to deal not only with the consequences of this violence, but — as recommended, *inter alia*, by the Beijing Platform for Action — also with its causes. Certainly, that would take us off the field of battle and into the wider society. Those attitudes, values and traditions that sanction such behaviour must be consistently confronted and discouraged.

Activities specific to combating sexual violence in armed conflict are taking place on two fronts — international and national. At the international level, the emergence of a universal working definition to facilitate data collection should advocate timely, reliable and verified information and proper analysis of data on the occurrence of sexual violence in situations of armed conflict. Such a definition will help stakeholders in delivering survivor and victim-focused responses. Overcoming the trauma they have had to endure is an important factor in helping women to become active peacebuilding actors in the future. In addition, such a definition will also considerably refine the monitoring, analysis and reporting arrangements recommended by resolution 1960 (2010).

Apart from greater clarity about the problem, we also take note that technical infrastructure to combat

sexual violence in armed conflict has been under careful construction, inter alia, through the establishment of a technical-level working group as part of the United Nations response and placing a women's protection adviser in the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict.

The responsibility to implement relevant Security Council resolutions with a view to enhancing women's participation in peace processes, including the protection of women from all forms of sexual violence, rests primarily with their respective Governments. At the national level, stress has been placed on national ownership of the peacebuilding process. Indonesia fully agrees with this. In effect, this means that any external support provided for the process must be demand-driven.

It is also important that the role of women not be minimized in any way at this level. Their inputs are integral to enhancing civilian capacity, especially in the most affected developing countries. Indonesia believes that dialogue, partnership and cooperation within the framework of the global South are of critical importance to the peacebuilding capacities of developing countries.

We also appreciate the work done by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Department of Field Support on the guidelines for integrating a gender perspective into the work of the United Nations military in peacekeeping operations. Predeployment gender-related training for peacekeepers is also significant in contributing to a more enhanced understanding of the protection of women and children by United Nations peacekeepers. The gender training workshop for peacekeepers that will be held in Indonesia next April is part of such efforts.

Equally important is the enhancement of the capacity of national institutions dealing with security and judicial matters so that they can be safeguarded against impunity. Every effort must be made to stamp out sexual violence as a method or tactic of warfare.

The President (*spoke in French*): I now give the floor to the representative of Italy.

Mr. Ragolini (Italy): I congratulate you, Sir, on organizing this open debate of the Security Council. I wish to thank the Special Representative of the

Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict and the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations for their briefings. I would like express great appreciation for the work of the Office of the Special Representative, as well as that of the United Nations Team of Experts on the Rule of Law and Sexual Violence in Conflict.

While Italy aligns itself with the statement that has been delivered by the observer of the European Union, we wish to make some additional remarks in our national capacity.

We welcome the report of the Secretary-General on conflict-related sexual violence (S/2012/33). The report provides us with a comprehensive picture of what clearly remains a daunting challenge for the international community. It shows that the past year has seen several new and ongoing armed conflicts in which sexual violence has been widespread and, in some instances, used by armed forces and armed groups in order to punish, humiliate and destroy civilian populations. The report also reveals worrisome emerging trends, such as the use of sexual violence in the context of political struggle, and in this context we hope that the Security Council will be able to agree on a presidential statement today.

Against this background, I would like to focus on some key messages. The first concerns the fight against impunity. As we have stated on previous occasions before this body, we cannot expect to eradicate sexual violence if we do not ensure that those who are responsible are systematically brought to justice. The message must be clear — sexual violence is not cost-free. We welcome therefore the inclusion in the report of a list of parties credibly suspected of committing or being responsible for patterns of rape and other forms of sexual violence. The list must become a basis for a more active engagement of the Council towards perpetrators of conflict-related sexual violence, including taking measures through the relevant sanctions committees, referring them to the International Criminal Court and mandating international commissions of inquiry.

Secondly, as committed as we are to targeting the perpetrators of sexual violence, we must give full priority to the health, safety and dignity of survivors. National and international programmes for post-conflict reconstruction must ensure that their needs are met and voices heard. Adequate and timely resources

are required to sustain processes that are meant to be lengthy and complex.

Thirdly, prevention is always key. The Secretary-General's report also serves this purpose, as it provides the information needed not only to react, but first and foremost to prevent. We look forward to the progressive strengthening of the monitoring, analysis and reporting arrangements mandated by resolution 1960 (2010). We also encourage the adoption of national and regional early warning systems that could draw upon the United Nations Matrix of Early-Warning Indicators of Conflict-Related Sexual Violence.

Fourthly, there is a need to systematically include the issue of conflict-related sexual violence in the work of the Council, especially when authorizing and renewing the mandates of peacekeeping and special political missions. The progressive deployment of women's protection advisers to United Nations missions is also critical.

Finally, it is necessary to include women and women's rights in peace talks. Women are formidable negotiators, mediators and peacebuilders. Their participation in preventive diplomacy is insurance against any attempt to minimize or neglect the consequences of the use of sexual violence.

Italy contributed to the drafting of resolution 1820 (2008), which first recognized the link between the systematic use of sexual violence and the maintenance of peace and security. We continue to keep this commitment high in our human rights policies. In December 2010, we adopted a three-year action plan to implement resolution 1325 (2000) on women and peace and security, which places the protection of women and girls against any form of violence among its main priorities and objectives.

Let me also recall that next week the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women will open its annual session. This will be an opportunity for all delegations to confirm their commitment to promoting and protecting the rights of women and girls in all circumstances, including in conflict-related situations. As a member of the Commission, Italy will not miss this opportunity.

I wish to conclude by reminding all of us of the issue at stake. The report in front of us is not just about information and numbers. It is actually about individuals, their often tragic stories and their hopes

for a better future. Let us not forget that they count on us.

The President (*spoke in French*): I now give the floor to the representative of Nepal.

Mr. Acharya (Nepal): My delegation wishes to express its sincere appreciation to you, Mr. President, for organizing this important open debate on women and peace and security.

Resolution 1820 (2008) and the subsequent resolutions on women and peace and security emphasize, *inter alia*, the importance of working concertedly for the elimination of all forms of violence against women and girls, particularly sexual violence during and after conflict. Some progress has been recorded in various aspects by Member States, the United Nations system and civil society organizations in the implementation of the Council's resolutions on women and peace and security.

Yet, there is a long way to go to realize the noble goals laid down in the resolutions. It is unacceptable that, even in the twenty-first century, women and girls are abused sexually as a tactic of war to humiliate, dominate and instil fear in civilian members of a community. There is a need for a comprehensive, coordinated and sustained effort to end sexual violence and to protect and promote women's rights during and after conflict, as it requires several immediate measures as well as longer-term reforms in policing, judicial systems and entire socio-cultural belief systems to ensure a dignified place for women in society.

The report of the Secretary-General contained in document S/2012/33 gives the impression that no action has been taken against perpetrators of sexual violence in Nepal. That is not corroborated by facts on the ground. Perpetrators of sexual violence have been punished by the judiciary. Although there are some individual cases, let me also make it clear that sexual violence was never used as a policy of coercion by either of the parties during the conflict in Nepal.

Allow me to address the issue of women in promoting peace and security and what we have been trying to do to enhance the empowerment of women in general in the post-conflict situation. Nepal has come a long way after the signing of the Comprehensive Peace Accord in 2006 in terms of ensuring women's participation at the decision-making level. The election

of women to one-third of the seats in Parliament has sent a very strong signal about the unprecedented equality and empowerment of women, with deep reverberations of change in Nepalese society.

Nepal has accorded high priority to the implementation of the many Security Council resolutions on women and peace and security as we move from conflict to durable peace, stability and economic development. In that context, Nepal is proud to stand with its distinctive five-year national action plan for the effective implementation of the Council's resolutions on women and peace and security. We have already started the implementation of our national action plan through a multi-pronged approach whereby Parliament, Government ministries, judiciaries, political parties and civil society are involved in their respective areas. That will ensure the meaningful participation by women at all levels of the decision-making process of governance, including in conflict transformation and peacebuilding processes. We have also put in place mechanisms at the local level, together with some strong monitoring mechanisms, to follow up on implementation. We welcome the genuine partnership and collaboration of the international community in our endeavour. In that regard, we reiterate our conviction that partnership and cooperation must be forged for building and promoting national capacity.

Nepal has taken a number of initiatives to take care of the special needs of women and bring them forward. It is mandatory that women participate at a rate of at least 33 per cent in the constitution of local peace committees at the district level, which are empowered to address post-conflict-related issues at the local level. Nepal has been implementing gender-based budgeting for some years, through which gender mainstreaming has been getting special attention in all development activities. Nepal has introduced a policy of affirmative action in various areas, including in the civil service, with a view to ensuring that women participate at the decision-making level in the public sector.

We have adopted various measures to fight against sexual and gender-based violence, notably by establishing of a follow-up office in the Office of the Prime Minister, a gender violence prevention fund, and gender violence control committees in all 75 districts of the country. We are committed to expanding women and children service centres in police stations across

the country to ensure the expeditious investigation and the prosecution of cases of sexual and gender-based violence.

Furthermore, we are committed not only to increasing the number of women in our army and police force, but also to contributing an increasing number of them to United Nations peacekeeping operations. We have integrated the essential portion of courses on the protection of women and girls from sexual violence during and after conflict in our peacekeeping training package. Nepal is fully aware of the Secretary-General's zero tolerance policy and has expressed its commitment to fully supporting the endeavour.

While moving from conflict to durable peace and stability, Nepal is taking this transformative phase as an opportunity for creating and inculcating new values into Nepali society, where all women and men participate in the nation-building processes in an equal footing.

In conclusion, we all have to enhance our efforts in a coordinated way to end sexual violence and to ensure the empowerment of women in all spheres of life. An enhanced level of support, collaboration and cooperation from the international community would go a long way towards ensuring the early realization of our common objectives, as expressed in the Council's resolutions.

The President (*spoke in French*): I now give the floor to the representative of the Republic of Korea.

Mr. Shin Dong Ik (Republic of Korea): At the outset, Mr. President, let me express my sincere appreciation to you for convening this open debate. My appreciation also goes to the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict, Ms. Margot Wallström; Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, Mr. Hervé Ladsous; and Ms. Amina Megheirbi of the NGO Working Group on Women, Peace and Security for her insightful presentation.

Over the past three years, the Security Council has made significant progress in highlighting the egregious phenomenon of conflict-related sexual violence, including through its adoption of resolutions 1820 (2008), 1888 (2009) and 1960 (2010). A series of mechanisms established by those resolutions has contributed to identifying and preventing conflict-

related sexual violence. However, it is deeply disturbing that we are still witnessing widespread and systematic sexual violence in conflict and post-conflict situations.

In that regard, my delegation welcomes the Secretary-General's report (S/2012/33). It provides us with useful information for today's debate, including incidents of sexual violence in many conflict areas and progress on United Nations initiatives. In particular, we commend the tireless efforts of the Special Representative to address the issue effectively.

Noting with appreciation the series of recommendations in the report of the Secretary-General, my delegation would like to highlight the following points.

First, my delegation would like to underline the significance of ensuring accountability by eliminating impunity for sexual violence. That is key to fighting conflict-related sexual violence by showing the perpetrators that their acts are not cost-free. We welcome the fact that the United Nations Team of Experts on the Rule of Law and Sexual Violence in Conflict, established under resolution 1888 (2009), has been fully operational since May 2011. We would like to encourage the Team, in close collaboration with other United Nations entities, to further enhance its assistance to Governments in strengthening the capacity of their civilian and military justice systems and institutional safeguards against impunity.

Secondly, we need to pay greater attention to sexual violence in post-conflict settings. While many incidents of sexual violence have been reported after the end of conflict, it is regrettable that few ceasefire or peace agreements include provisions for conflict-related sexual violence. As the report of the Secretary-General rightly points out, the inclusion of such provisions can increase the durability of peace by mitigating security fears, as well as addressing the sexual violence itself. In that regard, we welcome the publication by the Department of Political Affairs of the United Nations Guidance for Mediators on Addressing Conflict-Related Sexual Violence in Ceasefire and Peace Agreement. We encourage United Nations envoys and mediators to ensure that conflict-related sexual violence is properly addressed in preventive diplomacy efforts, mediation and peace processes, based upon the Guidance.

Thirdly, more attention needs to be given to the prevention of conflict-related sexual violence. Sexual violence is not a corollary of conflict, but it can be prevented. In that regard, we note with appreciation a series of recent United Nations initiatives to that end, including the development of scenario-based predeployment training modules on preventing and addressing conflict-related sexual violence in peacekeeping operations. In addition, we welcome the development of a framework of early warning signs that are specific to conflict-related sexual violence. We believe that Member States, donors and regional organizations, for their part, need to enhance their efforts to strengthen national and regional prevention mechanisms, drawing upon, as appropriate, the United Nations early-warning system and training courses.

As a member of the Group of Friends of resolution 1325 (2000), the Republic of Korea has actively engaged in the international cooperation for the prevention of sexual violence against women and girls in conflict and post-conflict situations. In the firm belief that proper training for peacekeepers is indispensable to preventing and responding to sexual violence in conflict situations, the Korean Government has been bolstering its predeployment gender training for military and police personnel deploying to United Nations peacekeeping operations. The Korean Government has also strengthened its efforts to enable those personnel to have a better understanding of gender and cultural differences in the traditional and historical context of the host communities by carrying out cultural-awareness and sensitivity training.

In conclusion, the momentum generated over the past three years by the adoption of a series of resolutions to address conflict-related sexual violence should not be lost. We need to ensure that the implementation of mechanisms shows tangible results on the ground. The Republic of Korea reaffirms its commitment to implementing all the resolutions to eradicate conflict-related sexual violence, in cooperation with the international community.

The President (*spoke in French*): I give the floor to the representative of Japan.

Mr. Kodama (Japan): First of all, I would like to express my appreciation to you, Sir, for convening this important open debate on conflict-related sexual violence. I would also like to thank the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual

Violence in Conflict, Ms. Wallström; the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, Mr. Ladsous; and the Libyan representative of the NGO Working Group on Women, Peace and Security for their insightful briefings.

Japan welcomes the Secretary-General's recent report (S/2012/33), which contains broad information on parties committing or responsible for acts of rape and other forms of sexual violence, including in post-conflict situations and other situations of concern. We expect that the monitoring, analysis and reporting arrangements will be made fully functional in all situations experiencing conflict-related sexual violence, and that they will contribute to providing more specific and detailed information on conflict-related sexual violence both in the country-specific reports and in the thematic reports of the Secretary-General in the future.

We also appreciate that, for the first time, the report lists parties that are credibly suspected of committing or being responsible for patterns of rape and other forms of sexual violence in situations of armed conflict, as per the Security Council agenda. Japan strongly condemns the parties listed and calls on them to make specific, time-bound commitments to ceasing acts of sexual violence and bringing perpetrators to justice. If they fail to do so, the Security Council must respond with appropriate measures, including targeted measures, to hold those parties accountable.

In that regard, we commend the fact that the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1533 (2004) concerning the Democratic Republic of the Congo decided last December to add Ntabo Ntaberi Cheka, a militia leader responsible for mass rape, to the sanctions list. We are also encouraged to hear that earlier this month the Guinean court filed charges against Lieutenant Colonel Moussa Tiegboro Camara for the mass rape committed in Conakry in 2009.

Japan reiterates its full support for the mandate of Special Representative Wallström and commends her vigorous advocacy efforts towards ending conflict-related sexual violence. We welcome the fact that the Team of Experts has become fully operational and that it has so far visited four countries. Japan encourages those countries to continue cooperating with the Team of Experts on the Rule of Law and Sexual Violence in Conflict, and hopes that they will use the Team's

expertise to strengthen the rule of law, improve their justice systems and reform their security sectors to combat sexual violence.

As the Special Representative has pointed out on many occasions, sexual violence is never a by-product of conflict, and it can be prevented. We should focus more on the prevention side of the issue. Japan welcomes the framework of early warning signs specific to conflict-related sexual violence that has been developed based on collective analysis by the broader membership of the United Nations system. We encourage all stakeholders to incorporate the framework of early warning indicators into their immediate responses to conflict. We also expect that the Secretary-General's next report will include more analysis on the root causes of conflict-related sexual violence from the perspective of prevention.

Finally, I would like to underline the important role played by United Nations Action against Sexual Violence in Conflict, a network of 13 United Nations entities chaired by Special Representative Wallström. United Nations Action is the key to a comprehensive and coordinated approach to preventing and responding to conflict-related sexual violence. Japan welcomes United Nations Action's strategic framework for 2011-12, which specifies the leading entities for each action. We expect that United Nations Action will further strengthen its network and activities on the ground, particularly by making tangible the positive changes for the survivors of conflict-related sexual violence.

The President (*spoke in French*): I give the floor to the representative of Estonia.

Ms. Intelmann (Estonia): Allow me to begin by aligning myself with the statement delivered by the observer of the European Union and by thanking you, Sir, for convening this debate. I would also like to thank the Secretary-General for his report (S/2012/33) and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict for her statement. We strongly support the mandate of the Special Representative, including the requirement to provide periodic statements as important updates on the state of sexual violence in conflicts around the world. Special Representative Wallström has been an important advocate for the fight against conflict-related sexual violence, and we especially appreciate her focus on the accountability dimension.

Sexual violence can be a crime of international concern, especially if it is part of a widespread or systematic campaign and can therefore constitute a war crime, a crime against humanity or even an act of genocide. The need to ensure accountability for such crimes is self-evident.

International tribunals have long been at the forefront of the fight against impunity for such crimes. The International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda, for example, recognized rape as an act of genocide for the first time in history in 1998. The Rome Statute, adopted earlier that very year, represented a tremendous step forward by incorporating, for the first time and explicitly in an international legal framework, sexual violence such as rape, sexual slavery, enforced prostitution and forced pregnancy. It did so in a way that makes their prosecution a practical possibility. The importance of implementing those provisions is further illustrated by the obligation of the Prosecutor to take into account the nature of a crime, in particular where it involves sexual violence, gender violence or violence against children.

In the brief history of the Court, the Office of the Prosecutor has brought charges for sexual violence against 13 of the 27 individuals for whom he has requested warrants of arrest or summonses to appear, charging sexual violence as a war crime, a crime against humanity and an act of genocide. Indeed, as International Criminal Court (ICC) Prosecutor-Elect Fatou Bensouda has stated, the most striking quality of the pursuit of gender crimes by the Court to date has been their centrality to every prosecution so far. While the Court cannot deal with all instances of sexual violence, it has nevertheless proven itself to be a powerful tool for bringing those responsible for the gravest such crimes to justice.

The nexus between the United Nations and the ICC in the fight against sexual violence is very clear. The Court is active in six of the situations highlighted in the Secretary-General's report, whether through preliminary examinations, investigations or prosecutions. However, the Rome Statute limits the Court's reach to its States parties, and to crimes committed after 1 July 2002. Crimes falling outside those two criteria are the specific responsibility of the States concerned and, where necessary, of the Security Council, for, as the preamble to the Rome Statute reminds us, grave crimes threaten the peace, security and well-being of the world. The Council has also

recognized conflict-related sexual violence as a threat to international peace and security, condemning its use as a tactic of war.

It is incumbent on the Council to react effectively to acts of sexual violence when it is likely that they amount to the most serious crimes under international law. Council action should be based on credible reports, including those of the Secretary-General. The use of accountability mechanisms, including referrals to the International Criminal Court and the use of targeted sanctions against those responsible for rape and other forms of sexual violence, in accordance with resolution 1960 (2010), are but two of the tools available. It would be remiss of the Council not to make use of such tools if the circumstances so demand.

When discussing sexual violence, let us not forget the burden borne by victims. Under the Rome Statute, victims of crime have the opportunity to participate in proceedings before the Court. Victims of sexual violence also require targeted assistance of the sort rendered by the Trust Fund for Victims established by the Statute. To name but one example, a project in the Ituri region of the Democratic Republic of Congo provides education, day care and basic health-care services to 67 girls who had been abducted by the armed forces and had borne children while in captivity. Whether through multilateral or bilateral development cooperation, it is important that donors remember the special needs of the victims of sexual violence.

Women are the largest group of victims of sexual violence, which is why the fight against impunity must be complemented by efforts to empower women to become actors in peace and security. For this reason, Estonia attaches great importance to implementing and further developing resolution 1325 (2000) and its follow-on resolutions in order to strengthen the role of women in conflict prevention, settlement and peacebuilding.

The President (*spoke in French*): I now give the floor to the representative of Canada.

Mr. Rivard (Canada): On behalf of the Government of Canada, I thank the Togolese presidency for convening today's open debate on conflict-related sexual violence.

Canada welcomes the Secretary-General's recent report (S/2012/33) and thanks the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual

Violence in Conflict for her presentation today and her efforts to strengthen United Nations mechanisms to prevent and respond to such crimes, including rape and trafficking of women and girls. Canada encourages the Security Council to receive regular briefings by the Special Representative following her visits to countries on the Council's agenda.

(spoke in French)

Canada strongly supports the Security Council's recognition of the need to take effective measures to prevent and respond to conflict-related sexual violence, including rape as a weapon of war. In this regard, Canada calls on the Council to ensure the implementation of increased accountability measures for these crimes, including monitoring and reporting arrangements and holding those responsible for sexual violence to account. It is also important to give consideration to the health, safety and dignity of survivors.

Canada welcomes the inclusion of the list of perpetrators of acts of sexual violence in the annex to the Secretary-General's report. My country calls on the Security Council to increase pressure on States to hold perpetrators of sexual violence to account. Canada also calls on the Security Council to ensure that its sanctions committees adopt criteria pertaining to acts of sexual violence such as rape as a weapon of war, sexual slavery, enforced prostitution, forced pregnancy, enforced sterilization or other forms of sexual violence of comparable gravity.

(spoke in English)

Canada urges the Council to consistently address conflict-related sexual violence in its work, including by ensuring that preventing and responding to sexual violence is part of the mandated tasks of United Nations peacekeeping operations. In the upcoming mandate renewals of the United Nations Support Mission in Libya and the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan next month, mandate elements addressing sexual violence should be strengthened.

Canada supports the efforts of the Team of Experts on the Rule of Law and Sexual Violence in Conflict and the use of the early warning indicators that are being piloted for use in select projects, including operations in South Sudan and in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

The President *(spoke in French)*: I now give the floor to the representative of Bangladesh.

Mr. Momen (Bangladesh): Mr. President, at the outset I would like to express my appreciation to you for organizing this important meeting. I also thank Ms. Margot Wallström, Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict, for her comprehensive presentation of the report on sexual violence in armed conflict (S/2012/33).

In the landmark resolution 1325 (2000), the Security Council recognized the important role of women in maintaining peace and security. It also highlighted specific needs and concerns of women during and in the aftermath of armed conflicts. We feel proud that Bangladesh, as a member of the Council at the time of the resolution's adoption and one of its main sponsors, was closely associated with the adoption of that historic document. Periodic meetings of this sort offer us an opportunity to take stock of the progress achieved and the challenges remaining in fulfilling the objectives of the resolution, as well as subsequent resolutions 1820 (2008), 1888 (2009) and 1960 (2000).

Some initiatives of the global community in the first decade of its adoption have been praiseworthy. The establishment of a new body, UN-Women, and the appointment of a Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict have been two significant developments that have placed women at the top of the global agenda. The Department of Peacekeeping Operations has also undertaken commendable steps for the better protection and enhanced participation of women.

The situation is far from satisfactory, however. We are disappointed to note that violence against women and girls is still prevalent in many parts of the world suffering from armed conflict. Women and girls, we all know, suffer most as victims of such conflicts. Their suffering is compounded when they are ignored or marginalized in peace processes. Women are too often excluded from both the negotiations that make peace and the institutions that maintain it. We underscore the need to do more to ensure the safety and security of women and girls, particularly during conflict situations and in their aftermath.

The participation of women should be ensured at all stages of peace processes, including conflict prevention, peace negotiations and post-conflict

reconstruction. We also believe that poverty and socio-economic deprivation are the breeding grounds for conflict, including sexual violence against women and girls. We therefore emphasize the importance of fulfilling the economic needs of women and of engaging women at all levels and in all forms of decision-making processes. Women's economic needs may be served by ensuring their access to and participation in income-generating and entrepreneurial activities in such areas as microcredit, vocational training and public health. Women's engagement at all levels of decision-making may be promoted through the recruitment of women to senior-level positions.

In Bangladesh, based on our experience with nation-building and women's empowerment, we have embraced this view and developed a model that our Prime Minister, Her Excellency Sheikh Hasina calls a "peace model". She believes that if peace is attained and maintained, development and prosperity will follow. The central message conveyed in the model emphasizes the empowerment of people, including women and other vulnerable groups. I am happy to note here that the General Assembly recently adopted resolution 66/224, entitled "People's empowerment and development".

Women occupy many top leadership positions in my country. The Constitution of Bangladesh guarantees the equality of men and women within the broad framework of non-discrimination on grounds of religion, race or gender. The 345-member National Parliament of Bangladesh has 45 seats reserved for women. We also have a significant number of elected women representatives in local bodies.

The Government has adopted a national policy for women's advancement and a national plan of action. A women's development implementation committee, headed by the Minister for Women and Children Affairs, monitors the implementation of policies for women's empowerment. It has also created a gender-based budget. We are benefiting greatly from all of those initiatives. To cite just one example, the enrolment of girls at primary and secondary level schools exceeds that of boys, and girls in secondary level schools are helped by tuition waivers and the provision of stipends.

We are pleased to make our modest contribution to the maintenance of international peace and security. Our troops and police are doing excellent work in

various United Nations peacekeeping missions. In line with our pro-women policy, we have been recruiting women in our regular forces, including police and the military. While they contribute to our national security, they are also sent to respond to international calls. For example, we deployed an all-female contingent serving as a female formed police unit in Haiti following the devastating earthquake there.

Finally, let me emphasize that we have a solemn responsibility to protect women and girls against all forms of violence and to ensure their rightful place in line with the letter and spirit of resolution 1325 (2000). On its part, my country stands ready to make its humble contribution to global efforts in promoting the status and role of women both nationally and internationally.

The President (*spoke in French*): I now give the floor to the representative of Luxembourg.

Ms. Lucas (Luxembourg) (*spoke in French*): I fully associate myself with the statement made on behalf of the European Union. I thank you sincerely, Mr. President, for providing the opportunity to review the progress achieved and the challenges ahead in the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) and subsequent resolutions, in particular the provisions on conflict-related sexual violence.

We welcome the start of implementation in the field, of the monitoring, analysis and reporting arrangements and hope that the difficulties remaining in collecting and verifying information and in establishing shared databases will soon be resolved.

We fully support the new United Nations initiatives in the fight against conflict-related sexual violence, in particular the development of early warning indicators to assist United Nations personnel on the ground in identifying early warning signs specific to acts of sexual violence and to better prevent such violence, as well as the importance attached to the inclusion in ceasefire and peace agreements of provisions on conflict-related sexual violence aimed at achieving durable peace.

The report of the Secretary-General (S/2012/33) illustrates in a most alarming way how impunity linked to human rights abuses of the past, in particular acts of sexual violence perpetrated in armed conflict, is a major factor undermining early recovery and peace consolidation, and frequently allows sexual violence to

persist. In that context, it is particularly disturbing, as the report indicates and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict also noted today, that in many countries the alleged perpetrators of sexual violence are not prosecuted for their acts, but are often promoted or appointed to senior Government positions in national institutions. The impunity of such high-ranking officers is unacceptable and prevents communities emerging from conflict to recover sustainably.

I echo the Secretary-General's call on the Security Council to employ all means at its disposal to fight conflict-related sexual violence, including the use of referrals to the International Criminal Court, and to increase pressure on the perpetrators of sexual violence through the adoption of targeted and graduated measures by relevant sanctions committees. The fight against impunity is also of major importance to the prevention of sexual violence.

In that context, allow me to highlight a positive development that has taken place since the publication of the Secretary-General's report. It was referred to today by the Special Representative, and I particularly value it in my capacity as Chair of the Guinea country-specific configuration of the Peacebuilding Commission. I am referring to the indictment under Guinean justice of Lieutenant Colonel Moussa Tiegboro Camara, who is suspected of being one of the main persons responsible for the violence that occurred, including mass rape, in the Conakry stadium on 28 September 2009. This is an important step in the right direction.

Since the most recent public debate of the Council on the issue at hand (S/PV.6642) on 28 October 2011, Luxembourg has further intensified its commitment to supporting women in armed conflict, including through its support of the work of the Team of Experts on the Rule of Law and Sexual Violence in Conflict and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict. This is our response to the Secretary-General's call on Member States, reiterated in this year's report, to provide the resources necessary to enable the full implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) and subsequent resolutions.

In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, a subregional workshop was organized in November 2011 in Goma, with the support of Luxembourg, by the

Office of Gender Affairs of the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo to promote exchanges of experiences among women's organizations in the Great Lakes region in the areas of peace, security and prevention of election-related violence. The workshop sought to help reduce the risk of the outbreak of conflict before, during and after elections. Training was also offered to improve conditions in order to promote women's participation in provincial and local elections in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

With the support of Luxembourg, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations has been able to implement similar initiatives in Timor-Leste and in Haiti. This year, again with our support, a national workshop in the Republic of South Sudan and a workshop for West Africa in Liberia will be held with the shared objective of strengthening the contributions of United Nations peacekeeping operations to increasing women's representation at all levels within national, regional and international institutions and to reinforcing mechanisms for the prevention, management and resolution of conflict.

The fight against conflict-related sexual violence is a moral obligation that we must fulfil together. Luxembourg can be counted on to continue its contribution to that collective effort.

The President (*spoke in French*): I now give the floor to the representative of Kenya.

Ms. Ojiambo (Kenya): Kenya welcomes the leadership shown by Togo in holding this debate during its presidency. The United Nations is commemorating the twelfth year since the unanimous adoption of resolution 1325 (2000) and two years since the adoption of resolution 1960 (2010). My delegation notes with satisfaction the commitment shown by Member States, the United Nations system, civil society and other actors in implementing those and related resolutions. Those resolutions, together with other international instruments constitute the bedrock for women's work on peace and security and also the basis for cooperation among all actors involved in this field.

Violence against women in all its manifestations must be dealt with firmly and decisively. In that regard, my delegation reiterates Kenya's commitment to the full implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) and the follow-up resolutions.

Sexual abuse is perhaps the most dehumanizing crime known to humankind. The international community currently has the framework to bring about more action and visibility to address this heinous crime in times of conflict. Prevention is the cornerstone of any strategy to address the challenges that society faces. We therefore must address the underlying causes of conflict that provide the springboard for redressing sexual abuse cases.

Preventive diplomacy as an intervention must be undertaken expediently to protect potential victims and to nip any kind of possible impunity in the bud. The Council has previously recognized a critical link between security issues and socio-economic concerns such as poverty, disease and environmental degradation. We believe that countries must systematically integrate and mainstream women-specific issues in all action plans in order to tackle the growing problem of sexual and gender-based violence during conflict and even in peacetime. The need to mainstream a gender perspective into peacekeeping and peacebuilding initiatives cannot be overemphasized.

Following the post-election violence in Kenya in 2007, the Government set out an ambitious plan to put in place a new Constitution and build and strengthen institutions of governance that would be accountable to and responsive to the needs of its citizens. In clear recognition that all human development and human rights issues, including peace and security, have gender dimensions, Kenya has made great advances in mainstreaming gender in its institutions of governance. Indeed, arguably, such advances have not been made by any country in such a short period of time and during peacetime.

The judiciary is now fiercely independent; the investigation and prosecution branches have been revamped. A new Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission has been established to better manage elections. Other institutions, such as the National Cohesion and Integration Commission and the Commission for the Implementation of the Constitution, have also been established and are currently monitoring the pace and quality of reforms, including the enactment of necessary legislation to avert any recurrence of events similar to those of 2007.

The Kenyan Constitution has entrenched women's participation in all aspects of Kenya's

governance structures and societal life in general. By promoting full and effective participation and granting the Kenyan woman her rightful place at the decision-making table, Kenya has ensured that there shall be nothing about society without women's involvement and genuine participation. But ever since the African Union/United Nations-sponsored mediation process that led to the formation of the coalition Government, Kenya has remained true to its promises and strived, against great odds, to carry out its obligations responsibly. No single, simple metric conveys better the contrast between the situation as it then was and is now. Kenya's cooperation with the International Criminal Court and the putting in place of key legislation, such as the International Crimes Act and the Witness Protection Act, provide necessary legal safeguards for the effective prosecution of the perpetrators of post-election violence. Kenya is grateful to the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime for its continued support in this regard.

The main thrust of resolution 1960 (2010) is the creation of an accountability system listing those parties credibly suspected of committing or responsible for patterns of sexual violence. Needless to say, there are no ongoing patterns of sexual violence in Kenya today, and none of the activities reported concerning Kenya took place during the current reporting period of 2010-2011. The post-election violence of January 2008 is therefore way outside the mandated reporting period. Additionally, Kenya's report has been lumped together with another situation with which there is no correlation. This is not to say that Kenya has not taken any action to redress the situation described in the report. Indeed, the Attorney General and the Chief Justice, both newly appointed, have been holding consultations on how best to deal with these cases.

In conclusion, I wish to note that all over the world, many women are denied their social, economic, political and civil rights. They are systematically discriminated against because of their gender. While I reaffirm Kenya's commitment to implementing resolutions 1325 (2000) and 1960 (2010), there is a nexus between violence against women and the economic and power structure. We must therefore emphasize on greater coherence and coordination in addressing women's issues in a fair and holistic manner in all situations. It is therefore imperative that consideration be given to how best to incorporate the activities of the Office of the Special Representative of

the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict with the work of UN-Women.

Finally, we reiterate that Kenya condemns all forms of violence against women, including sexual violence, and has always urged compliance with both humanitarian and human rights law during times of conflict. We believe that we have a duty, individually and collectively, to protect women from violence and other atrocities during times of war. Women also must participate in reconstruction efforts, free from threats, intimidation and discrimination during recovery or post-conflict periods. It is pertinent, therefore, that in all situations the special needs of women be respected and their concerns addressed. Women's perceptions, concerns and opinions must form an integral part of all decision-making processes. Indeed, traditional stereotypes that have ostensibly kept women away from decision-making forums must be broken.

The President (*spoke in French*): I now give the floor to the representative of Ireland.

Ms. Anderson (Ireland): We appreciate very much that this debate on conflict-related sexual violence is taking place during Togo's presidency of the Security Council. We commend the Secretary-General for his report (S/2012/33). It is compelling in its range, clarity and detail. The litany of crimes to which it bears witness is shameful.

The challenge is to ensure that our outrage translates into determined and purposeful action, yielding early and measurable results. Before commenting further on the Secretary-General's report, I would wish to note actions undertaken by my Government in the past few months.

Our Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister addressed the Security Council two weeks ago (see S/PV.6715) in his capacity as Chairperson-in-Office of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). In his statement, he made clear that the issue of women and peace and security will receive strong emphasis throughout Ireland's chairing of the Organization. A new Special Representative of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office on Gender Issues, Ms. June Zeitlin, has been appointed. Ireland is also providing a dedicated military officer, based at our Permanent Mission to the OSCE in Vienna, to examine ways in which the OSCE can support the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) and related resolutions.

Ireland has also wished to demonstrate at the national level its strong continuing support for the work of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict. As a concrete demonstration of that support, we have made a financial contribution to the Team of Experts on the Rule of Law and Sexual Violence in Conflict. Aware that the Team of Experts relies upon extrabudgetary resources, we were pleased to be able to contribute \$135,000 at the end of last year.

The report before us is testament to the need for a dedicated Special Representative on Sexual Violence in Conflict, with the strong mandate which the Special Representative holds. These are crimes surrounded by taboos and silence, consistently underreported and, even when they are reported, unlikely to be followed up. If there is to be any chance of penetrating the darkness, we need a strong and unwavering searchlight. The independent voice and exclusive focus of the Special Representative helps to shine that steady light. The latest report from the Secretary-General validates both the appointment of a dedicated Special Representative and the clarity and scope of her mandate.

The report addresses a range of specific situations spanning four continents, all of them deserving our attention. In some of these situations, conflict still rages; others are post-conflict but still dealing with a poisonous legacy. Côte d'Ivoire, Libya and South Sudan are among the more recent ugly chapters. The sexual violence being unleashed in Syria, with male detainees as particular targets, deserves our unequivocal condemnation.

Given the time constraints and the breadth of coverage in earlier interventions, I will limit myself to commenting on three points, illustrated by three case studies.

The first is a case study on ending impunity. We all recognize the simple equation: impunity for perpetrators of sexual violence guarantees that the virus will spread; conversely, ending impunity and making the perpetrators pay will act as a deterrent.

The first step in ending impunity is the systematic gathering of credible evidence. The Secretary-General's report gives a sense of the progress being made in that regard. For the first time in a report of this nature, the Secretary-General has named individuals on the basis of credible reports of culpability.

In the commentary on the Democratic Republic of the Congo, for example, one finds the names of 10 or so individuals. That specificity of data will enable us to measure outcomes. When we next come back to this issue, it will be important to focus on precisely what has happened in those cases. What steps have the national authorities taken? What have we at the United Nations been able, or willing, to do?

The possibility of measuring outcomes will apply not just in the case of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, but also in relation to the list of parties set out in annex 1 to the Secretary-General's report.

The report includes clear recommendations to the Security Council on increasing pressure on perpetrators of conflict-related sexual violence. We look to the Council to show determination in its response. Too many recent headlines from the Security Council have been ones of disunity. On the issue of sexual violence in conflict, the Council has the opportunity to assert itself, to demonstrate that disunity does not define it, and to act decisively to sanction perpetrators, to refer cases to the International Criminal Court, to mandate commissions of inquiry and to condemn violations explicitly in resolutions and statements.

My second point is that women are not a footnote; and Somalia is a case study in that regard. The Secretary-General's report sets out the scale of sexual violence in Somalia: the crimes of Al-Shabaab; the groups of men in military uniform who prey on women and girls in internally displaced camps in Mogadishu; the rapes and gang-rapes in camps in Kenya; and the chronic and largely unaddressed sexual violence in Puntland.

The Conference on Somalia is meeting in London today, and we look forward to a substantive outcome. It is worthwhile, however, to mention an initiative of women ambassadors accredited to the African Union. The cross-regional group of women ambassadors — I might mention that the Ambassadors of Togo and Ireland were part of that group — were concerned that initial preparatory papers for the London Conference lacked any focus on the situation of women in Somalia, despite the gravity of their situation and the shared principles of resolution 1325 (2000).

With African Union (AU) and United Nations support, the group undertook meetings with Somali women both in Nairobi and in camps of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees in

the Ethiopian border region. The statement from the women ambassadors, produced yesterday, is intended as an input to the London Conference. It outlines issues of concern and concludes with the urging of Somali women that the international community raise issues of gender, including with Somali leaders.

Amid the range and gravity of the problems facing Somalia, and the imperative to advance on the political and security fronts, it is easy to see how specific issues predominantly affecting women may not be prioritized, or may be seen as symptomatic of deeper problems that, if addressed, will help to alleviate the situation of women. But the phenomenon of women as a footnote has been with us far too long. When the international community comes together in a high-profile conference, one would hope to see from the outset a strong consciousness of the gender dimension of the conflict. The time has well passed when sexual violence could be viewed as in some sense collateral damage — a regrettable but inevitable by-product of larger forces at work.

My third point pertains to the responsibilities of United Nations peacekeepers, and Chad is the case study. The Secretary-General's report sets out steps being taken to improve the training of peacekeepers with regard to conflict-related sexual violence. The Department of Peacekeeping Operations and UN-Women collaboration in that regard is particularly welcome. The standards for United Nations peacekeepers must be the highest. The Blue Helmet is designed to inspire confidence and trust; it is unthinkable that in any circumstance it should instil fear of rape or sexual violence.

Recognizing that progress is being made, it is still salutary to hear directly from those with first-hand experience. In Ireland's case, we had an instructive recent experience of peacekeeping in Chad. Ireland had overall command of the European Union military operation in the Republic of Chad and in the Central African Republic (EUFOR), and deployed more than 400 Irish troops. Subsequently, when EUFOR was replaced by United Nations Mission in the Central African Republic and Chad (MINURCAT), our troops continued to serve in the same numbers with the Mission until 2010.

The transition from EUFOR to MINURCAT afforded us the opportunity to witness differences in approach between the two peacekeeping models. One

of the areas where there was a measurable difference was in relation to the gender focus. Mission requirements relating to resolution 1325 (2000) were more specific and detailed during the EUFOR deployment than during the subsequent MINURCAT deployment.

That was a specific experience at a specific time, and may not be fully representative of today's circumstances. Yet the Chad experience left a strong imprint on our peacekeepers and an awareness of the challenge confronting the United Nations in that regard. Seeing the practical outcomes of gender work with EUFOR also further strengthened the commitment to training Irish peacekeepers on gender issues. A number of steps have been taken. I might mention that, as of May, our defence forces will deploy a gender adviser and gender focal points in the unit deploying to the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon.

The report before us makes for difficult reading, but it also lays down a challenge. We can no longer claim ignorance of what is happening, or the scale of what is happening; nor can we claim a lack of credible evidence as a rationale for inaction.

The Special Representative, fully backed by the Secretary-General, is pursuing her mandate in her characteristic vigorous and clear-sighted way. It is for all of us — in the Security Council, in the General Assembly and across the United Nations system — to take on our share of responsibility.

The President (*spoke in French*): I now give the floor to the representative of Peru.

Mr. Román-Morey (Peru) (*spoke in Spanish*): I am grateful for the initiative to hold an open debate in the Security Council on the role of women with regard to peace and security.

Resolution 1325 (2000) was a fundamental milestone in international law. Since it was adopted, the issue of women's role with regard to peace and security has had an important place on the Council's agenda, and therefore has a significant and crucial role in achieving the Council's goals.

The resolution was a starting point for subsequent developments on the issue in the Security Council aimed at ensuring women's participation in maintaining and strengthening peace and in combating all forms of violence against women and girls, especially sexual and gender-based violence. Along

with international human rights law and international humanitarian law, resolutions 1325 (2000), 1820 (2008), 1888 (2009), 1889 (2009) and 1960 (2010) provide the international community with the legal framework to address the needs and rights of women in conflict and post-conflict situations.

Women are clearly decisive actors at every stage of the peacebuilding process in the long term. It is therefore necessary to promote their full participation as an integral part of efforts to establish, maintain and strengthen peace. We therefore welcome the trend to systematically incorporate the gender perspective in the Security Council's work, especially in mission mandates, as well as the involvement of women in conflict resolution processes.

My country has a long history of sending women military observers to various peacekeeping operations. I am pleased to announce that, last November, Peru deployed its first female personnel to peacekeeping operations. Their numbers will continue to increase in future operations.

We must in no way allow violence against women and sexual violence to be seen as an inevitable part of armed conflicts. In that regard, we are pleased that the Secretary-General has implemented a zero-tolerance policy in peacekeeping operations for all forms of violence against women, gender violence and in particular violence and sexual abuse. We also welcome his recent report on the issue that recognizes the important work that has been done jointly by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, UN-Women and various actors of the United Nations system with regard to the development and implementation of a comprehensive strategy to combat this scourge, which is essential in order to respond in a timely and adequate manner to situations of sexual violence.

My country also supports the work of UN-Women, and we encourage it to continue to contribute decisively to the implementation of resolutions relating to peace and security. Peru also welcomes the work of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict on aspects linked to women, peace and security, especially relating to the prevention of sexual violence.

The fight against impunity for all forms of gender violence is essential to peacebuilding processes. It is

therefore necessary that States strengthen their judicial systems so that such cases can be duly and promptly brought to trial, including, whenever possible, women in those systems. It will also be important in that respect to continue to promote the ratification of the Statute of the International Criminal Court.

We agree with the Secretary-General that women are decisive players in the context of the three pillars required for lasting peace: economic recovery, social cohesion and political legitimacy. In that context, in post-conflict stages it is vital that stress be put on strengthening the rule of law as well as the social, economic and political empowerment of women, without any discrimination, ensuring their full integration into the community and their full political participation.

Peru believes that the high-level consideration of the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) proposed for 2015 would be an opportunity to consider, in a comprehensive manner, the progress made by the United Nations system and the measures promoted and adopted by Member States in priority prevention areas, which are participation, protection, assistance and recovery, and to consider the establishment of a working group charged with following up that resolution.

Since resolution 1325 (2000) was adopted, we have made progress in recognizing the importance of women's participation in peace and security. However, many challenges remain to which we must respond, and we must work jointly to ensure that women and girls can fully and without discrimination exercise their personal, employment, economic and social rights, which are recognized in international instruments, including their right to live without fear, without violence, with respect and with equal opportunities.

The President (*spoke in French*): I now give the floor to the representative of the Syrian Arab Republic.

Mr. Falouh (Syrian Arab Republic) (*spoke in Arabic*): Syria stresses the importance of the item under consideration and condemns all forms of sexual violence, particularly in armed conflict. It stresses also the need to put an end to such acts and to bring their perpetrators to justice while avoiding selectivity.

My country has read the report (S/2012/33) of the Secretary-General on conflict-related sexual violence. It has also read the information provided by the Special

Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict. Syria supports all efforts to end conflict-related sexual violence and to punish perpetrators and end impunity. However, we reject the allegations and claims made in the report with respect to my country, Syria. We request that caution and objectivity be exercised in addressing these important humanitarian issues.

We would have hoped that the authors of the report would have based the contents of the report on proof, evidence and facts instead of relying on allegations that could be traced to reports by media that are hostile to Syria and to its people. The Syrian Government is ready to address any case in that respect so that it can investigate it and punish anyone who has been proved to have committed a crime under Syrian laws.

The Special Representative mentioned my country in the report before us in the context of what she called sexual violence and in the context of elections, political strife and civil unrest, thereby exceeding the mandate entrusted to her by resolutions 1888 (2009) and 1960 (2010). Under those resolutions, she has the right to express concern and to draw the attention of the Security Council to forms of sexual violence committed only in the context of armed conflict or post-conflict situations.

Recent developments in Syria have shown that there is an unprecedented fierce and misleading political and media campaign against Syria that is aimed at undermining its stability and security. That campaign uses the lives of Syrians and their legitimate demands for reform as a means of implementing special foreign agendas that would not serve the Syrian people or promote their human rights. The campaign seeks to undermine centuries-old coexistence among Syrians and the Syrian State in favour of fomenting violence and promoting chaos and terror.

Western and Arab States have, unfortunately, provided generous financial contributions to arm the terrorist groups that are committing acts of violence of all kinds, including killings, against civilians, members of the military and public and private institutions. The Syrian Arab Republic would like to reiterate that the Syrian State, under the Charter, has exclusive responsibility for the protection of its people and for ensuring respect for human rights and guaranteeing those rights for all individuals residing on its territory

and under its jurisdiction, as provided for in the provisions of international law, free from any foreign intervention.

My delegation addressed many official letters to the Special Representative, including documented information on the responsibility of armed terrorist groups for acts of rape and sexual abuse as well as the killing of Syrian women and girls. We also sent the Representative a DVD including the documented confessions of members of those groups, proving their responsibility for those crimes. Regrettably, the Special Representative ignored our attempt to provide her with that document and made only a passing reference to the documented crimes perpetrated by terrorist groups. The Special Representative chose to depend on reports that lack credibility and professionalism, so that she can hold the Syrian authorities responsible for the commission of acts of sexual violence without any credible evidence. That is supported by the Secretary-General, who states, at the end of paragraph 87 of his report, that the international commission of inquiry had not received sufficient testimony in connection with allegations of acts of rape or other forms of sexual violence.

The Secretary-General and his Special Representative adopted those allegations, while ignoring the responses of the Syrian Government and information already corroborated by public confessions. Such positions can be seen as indirect participation in misleading public opinion and disregard for the Syrian Government's position regarding events on its own territory. It is an irresponsible incitement of all sorts of acts of violence, providing international cover for international terrorist acts undertaken by terrorist groups against Syria, its interests and its people. We would have hoped that the Special Representative would try to be objective, neutral and non-political, and that she would not undertake work contrary to her mandate or take advantage of her post to cater to the interests of certain influential States Members of the Organization.

In conclusion, it is truly strange that the representative of the Israeli occupying Power — whose country has for decades committed all kinds of violations and crimes, including violence against girls and women in the occupied Arab territories in Palestine and in the occupied Syrian Golan — should accuse or lecture us even as Israel continues to commit all kinds of violence against women and girls who are still under

the yoke of the Israeli occupation. They are killed, raped and abused. In the occupied Palestinian territories, a Palestinian woman gives birth or has a miscarriage at an Israeli checkpoint and can barely reach a hospital. That is all I have to say.

The President (*spoke in French*): I now give the floor to the representative of Afghanistan.

Mr. Tanin (Afghanistan): At the outset, I would like to thank you, Mr. President, for convening this important meeting during your presidency of the Security Council this month. I also welcome the report of the Secretary-General on conflict-related sexual violence, which informs our discussion today (S/2012/33), and the insightful briefing of Ms. Wallström, Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict. The report and the meeting are timely and necessary. Central to today's debate is the relationship between conflict and sexual violence. In order to better understand that connection, I wish to address three main elements.

The first aspect is the importance of the focus of the international community. With the end of the Second World War in 1945, humanity was saved from another world war, but was not spared the effects of war and atrocities. Over 20 million people were killed in the 265 wars and conflicts between 1945 and 1990 and in the 186 wars and conflicts that erupted from 1990 to the present.

In the 1990s, after the Cold War, we increasingly faced a new form of war, with a decrease in the number of inter-State conflicts and an increase in the prevalence of intra-State tension and violent non-State actors. That brought new waves of atrocious horrors, including in my country, Afghanistan. The atrocities emerging from the conflicts of the 1990s, including genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity, raised a tenacious challenge for the international community and, subsequently, fuelled the prompt application of international laws and norms in response.

The second element is the interconnectedness of sexual violence and other atrocities. While sexual violence is embedded within the definition of war crimes and crimes against humanity, the international community should take a holistic approach to those atrocities, as they cannot be separated from one another. Furthermore, every atrocity is spawned from

the all-encompassing destruction of society caused by war. We cannot truly stop atrocities such as sexual violence without ending the violence, war and conflict that breed them.

The third aspect is the breakdown of cultural values. War is pervasive. It destroys the common understanding of decency and respect for human rights. It kills morals. It breaks down social contracts. It erodes solidarity and trust. As I saw in my own country, war and conflict resulted in the corrupting prevalence of a militant culture, countering society's values, based on tolerance and respect.

What emerged was, in fact, a militant anti-culture, caused by war. Crimes against Afghan people were committed and human rights violations were extensive, especially violence against women. We saw what had never before been seen in the history of Afghan women — a sequence of killing, maiming and violence.

However, in the past 10 years, after the fall of the Taliban, the Government of Afghanistan, with the support of the international community, has worked to put an end to violence in the country. That is essential to security and to protecting the rights of women, men and children.

Afghanistan adopted a law on the elimination of violence against women, which has provided the Government with stronger judicial means through which we can combat sexual violence more effectively. That is real progress towards breaking the silence with regard to violence and sexual violence. We are confident that, in the years to come, our efforts will yield more results and that women will be safer and more respected and will receive the justice that they deserve.

The President of Afghanistan also established a commission on the elimination of sexual abuse of children and women. The commission advises relevant organizations on how to fight against the sexual abuse of women and children and encourages relevant reporting to it.

Afghanistan acknowledges that the accomplishments that we have outlined are only the first steps towards achieving gender equality and the improvement of the position of women. The Afghan Government will therefore continue its effort to eliminate sexual violence and to advance women's

rights and empowerment. In that regard, the Government of Afghanistan welcomes resolutions 1325 (2000), 1888 (2009) and 1889 (2009), which identify combating sexual violence as a matter of peace and security.

The international community has an essential role to play in supporting the ongoing efforts in conflict-affected and post-conflict countries in order to end sexual violence and violence against women, combat impunity and offer assistance to victims of sexual violence. However, we need not only the support of the international community, but its awareness not to forget the violence that affected the lives of women, men and children. We must work together to ensure that such atrocities will never happen again.

The President (*spoke in French*): I now give the floor to the representative of El Salvador.

Mr. García Gonzalez (El Salvador) (*spoke in Spanish*): El Salvador welcomes your initiative, Mr. President, to convene this open debate of the Security Council on the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) on women, peace and security.

That resolution constitutes a cornerstone in the efforts to achieve full participation — on an equal basis — of women in all initiatives for peace and security, together with the integration of the gender perspective in the context of seeking a resolution of armed conflicts, in peacekeeping and peacebuilding and in post-conflict reconstruction and reconciliation.

Resolutions 1325 (2000), 1888 (2009) and 1889 (2009) constitute important policy instruments, since they make it possible to consider, in a broad, comprehensive fashion, the increasing complexities of conflict and post-conflict transitions to development situations from a gender perspective.

El Salvador recognizes that, 11 years after its adoption, progress has been achieved in the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000), as pointed out by the second report (S/2012/33) of the Secretary-General. The report clearly indicates the importance of making the women's peace and security component universal and cross-cutting, and not only from the perspective of the Security Council, but also from that of the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and its subsidiary bodies, and in particular, the Peacebuilding Commission, as appropriate.

The Secretariat has increased and given greater weight to reports covering women's issues. But, in our judgment, a consistent lack of information still exists regarding countries and specific situations of women in respect to this issue.

It is important to note that communication and information between field missions and Headquarters should be open and immediate in order to make it possible to update data. Furthermore, to the degree that the gender perspective is entrenched in the context of armed conflicts, associated problems come to light, such as the lack of prevention and protection against abuse and all kinds of violence against women and girls, including sexual violence, as was eloquently indicated by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General at this meeting.

In that regard, El Salvador agrees with other delegations and civil society organizations that the Secretary-General should be asked to include more systematically in all his reports on conflict situations broad information on acts of sexual violence and other gender-based acts against women and girls.

El Salvador recognizes the progress that has been made with regard to the mandates of peacekeeping operations, as many of them now include an express mandate on women, peace and security, as is the case of Libya, South Sudan, the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Guinea-Bissau, Sierra Leone, Darfur, Burundi, Haiti and Afghanistan.

El Salvador also recognizes and encourages the important role that can continue to be played in the future by United Nations Women, which has a special mandate to deal with this issue in a broad, comprehensive fashion.

To conclude, allow me to reiterate the Government of El Salvador's political will to continue making progress in promoting and implementing resolution 1325 (2000), as well as in strengthening the political participation of women in decision-making processes and in all areas affecting their lives.

The President (*spoke in French*): I now give the floor to the representative of Mexico.

Mrs. Morgan (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): We would like to congratulate you, Mr. President, on the way in which you are conducting the work of the Security Council this month. We are grateful for the

convening of this important meeting and for the briefing given by Special Representative of the Secretary-General Margot Wallström. We commend the committed way in which she has undertaken her mandate. We would also like to thank Mr. Harvé Ladsous and Ms. Amina Megheirbi for their statements.

One of the main challenges confronting the international community with regard to sexual violence in armed conflicts is to bring those responsible to justice in order to put an end to the culture of impunity. To that end, the Security Council must take robust measures against all those who are involved in committing those deplorable acts, in a manner consistent with international law. Given the scope and the impact of this type of crime, the Security Council must use every measure available to it, such as the adoption of sanctions targeting those who are responsible.

Likewise, as mentioned by the Secretary-General in his report (S/2012/33), the Security Council has the capacity to refer cases to the International Criminal Court and to mandate international investigation commissions.

We support the recommendation of the Secretary-General that sexual violence be included in the definition of acts that are prohibited under ceasefire agreements and peace and reconciliation processes. To date, only a few such agreements address this issue. If it is not addressed in an integrated way, there is a risk that sexual violence will continue to be used as a weapon of war.

At the national level, we must have effective national legislative frameworks that prevent sexual violence, eradicate impunity and provide for educational and awareness-raising programmes to prevent the stigmatization of victims. As we all know, this is one of the root causes of impunity. My delegation would like to reiterate the importance that access be provided to health care, to psychosocial support, to legal assistance and to socio-economic reintegration services for victims.

My delegation would like to stress that although peacekeeping operations can help avoid this scourge, what is most important is that national institutional capacities be developed, under the principle of national ownership, in order to prevent this crime in the medium and long term.

We are encouraged that the Group of Experts, with a mandate designed to reinforce the rule of law and the capacity of national systems, has already undertaken some working visits. My delegation appeals for the Group to continue to establish synergies between existing United Nations agencies and mechanisms that have experience in this matter.

It is important to recognize that other mechanisms and mandates exist that also deal with the question of sexual violence, something which unfortunately arises in varied contexts. In order to achieve tangible results, there must be no duplication. The Security Council and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General must focus on those cases within their mandates. That does not imply that they cannot enhance cooperation with other human-rights mechanisms that exist.

We are concerned that the report recognizes the fact that the Security Council still has to appeal for the deployment of advisers on the protection of women as a part of peacekeeping operations and special political missions. When resolution 1888 (2009), which was adopted by consensus in 2009, already includes the appointment of such advisers under mission mandates.

We welcome the development of training modules for staff, and we reiterate the need to increase the number of women on the ground. Such a measure would foster greater confidence among women in the host population and also provide more reliable information.

Combating sexual violence in armed conflicts is a long road, and it requires considerable stamina. The international community now has an institutional toolbox that can deal with the worst situations of sexual violence that are under consideration on the agenda of the Security Council.

We must ensure the continuous strengthening of this framework, being careful that each one of its parts is in accordance with its responsibilities and mandates. That includes peacekeeping operations, special political missions, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and other agencies of the United Nations involved in the matter, according to their respective competencies.

The President (*spoke in French*): I now give the floor to the representative of Sweden.

Mr. Grunditz (Sweden): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the Nordic countries — Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and my own country, Sweden. The Nordic countries thank the Secretary-General for his report to the Council (S/2012/33), and his Special Representative Margot Wallström for so ably leading the United Nations work in this difficult area. We also thank her, Under-Secretary-General Ladsous and the representative of the NGO Working Group, Amina Megheirbi, for their important statements here today.

The report of the Secretary-General constitutes a baseline and sets a standard for the Council to obtain more systematic, detailed and analytical information on conflict-related sexual violence. That was our hope when, in December 2010, we welcomed the creation of the monitoring, analysis and reporting arrangements. Now as we see progress in reporting, it is also time to improve our response, as Special Representative Wallström stated in her remarks earlier today.

We support the Secretary-General's recommendation to the Council to increase pressure on perpetrators through measures by the relevant sanctions committees. We welcome the further development of the monitoring, analysis and reporting mechanism and underline the need to avoid duplication and to ensure coordination with the monitoring and reporting mechanism on children and armed conflict and regular human rights reporting. In that context, we acknowledge the important work undertaken by both the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Sexual Violence in Conflict and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children in Armed Conflict.

We are pleased that Special Representative Wallström has been able to address the Council in country-specific meetings throughout her mandate when new information emerged. That type of interaction can allow preventive action to be taken in reasonable time. Timely, analytical and verified information allows a better response at all levels. National Governments and local civil society organizations can more accurately plan and establish effective early warning tools, response and protection mechanisms, as well as services for survivors. United Nations actors and international non-governmental organizations that support them can respond quicker and better.

The Security Council can take targeted and consistent action against perpetrators to fight impunity, increase compliance with international law and, ultimately, prevent such crimes from happening in the first place. We encourage the Council to explore ways by which it could enhance and systematize the consideration of information on serious violations being brought to it, as well as to use all possible tools at its disposal to respond.

The Nordic countries have always advocated a broad approach based on equal rights and the participation of both women and men as the best possible prevention tool in the long term. I would like to draw attention to two sectors where institutional reforms are particularly important in combating sexual violence and other serious human rights violations, namely, the security and justice sectors.

It is essential that every process aimed at security sector reform include a focus on sexual violence, as well as the broader security needs of women and girls. Training and capacity-building of national security actors should aim at a real shift in attitudes from a conflict management posture to the provision of security for citizens and communities, placing the person in the centre. When assessing security in the aftermath of a conflict, indicators such as women's movement between villages and children's school attendance should be used alongside the more traditional ones. Proper vetting procedures should be used to exclude perpetrators of sexual violence or other human rights violations from all branches of the security services. More women should be recruited and trained to serve in the security sector, including in leading positions. Specialized units for the reporting of sexual and gender-based violence should be set up, and the security sector should be placed under democratic control and supplied with accountability mechanisms, including accountability to local communities.

In order to incorporate those important aspects in the preparations for peacekeeping missions, all Nordic military and police personnel receive training on resolution 1325 (2000). A joint Nordic Centre for Gender in Military Operations was established last month in Stockholm. The aim of the Centre is to raise the countries' competence in gender issues within planning, execution and evaluation in military operations. The Nordic Centre for Gender in Military Operations will act as a hub for information, knowledge and experiences. The Centre will

continuously support and cooperate with the United Nations, the European Union, NATO and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe and other relevant actors. On this note, we particularly welcome the Department of Peacekeeping Operations continuing work on training, as addressed by Under-Secretary-General Ladsous earlier today.

There should never be impunity for sexual violence. We are pleased that the Council has demonstrated increasing willingness to use commissions of inquiry and referrals to the International Criminal Court. International inquiries and high-profile trials serve an important function but, as I mentioned a moment ago, national-level legal and justice sector reforms are at least as important to combat impunity and prevent and deter sexual violence in the long term.

The Nordic countries commend the Team of Experts on the Rule of Law for having in a short time developed a focused way to support Governments in this area. Elsewhere innovative practices such as mobile courts are being used to bring justice closer to the survivors and communities, serving a double-function of justice and confidence building. Enhanced access to justice should also be accompanied by enhanced reparations for victims. Innovative measures such as community reparations and the creation of economic and educational opportunities should be explored more widely.

Finally, the Nordic countries commend the Council and the broader United Nations system for continuing to address conflict-related sexual violence and to use available means to counter those threats against international peace and security. We strongly welcome the soon to be launched guidelines to address sexual violence in ceasefires and peace agreements. There can be no real peace unless there is peace and justice for survivors of sexual violence.

We express again our full support for the work Special Representative of the Secretary-General Wallström.

The President (*spoke in French*): I now give the floor to the representative of Sri Lanka.

Mr. Kohona (Sri Lanka): We thank you, Mr. President, for convening this important meeting under your leadership.

The adoption of resolutions 1820 (2008) and 1888 (2009) were seminal steps towards enhancing the protection of women and girls from sexual violence in conflict situations. The widespread abuse of women and children in conflict situations has caused much revulsion in civilized minds. Humankind had to take action to deal with this appalling reality. Sri Lanka is particularly thankful that the Security Council has adopted those proactive measures. Even though the devastation accompanying armed conflict does not discriminate along gender lines, it has been our common experience that certain conflict situations subject women and girls to a disproportionate share of violence, degradation and deprivation. Their vulnerability has been ruthlessly exploited by armies and armed groups consisting mainly of men.

In post-conflict environments also, the challenges faced by women remain formidable. Often they are forced to contend with family dislocation, shattered livelihoods and being the sole breadwinners. Many face the everyday reality of being single mothers and, in some contexts, that increases their vulnerability to sexual harassment, exploitation and violence. Gender parity and equity continue to elude women in many parts of the world in post-conflict contexts.

Sensitive to the vulnerabilities of women in post-conflict situations, the protection of war-affected women and children is a priority for the Government of Sri Lanka. Every effort is being made to ensure that their lives are returned to normalcy, as far as possible and as speedily as possible. Although resource-constrained, Sri Lanka has set up special women's protection units with female police officers and women's centres in the camps for internally displaced persons, and is continuing to provide psychosocial counselling services in the formerly conflict-affected north and east. Many women in those areas were psychologically devastated by the conflict and the attendant terrorism that lasted over 27 years.

With the end of the 30-year struggle against terrorism in May 2009, Sri Lanka has now entered a post-conflict phase that is challenged by many issues. They include resettlement, rebuilding livelihoods, the rehabilitation and reconstruction of dilapidated infrastructure, and bringing normalcy to the conflict-affected areas. Many of the economic rehabilitation activities implemented in the north and the east have women at the centre.

In addition, as an incremental step to enhance the mechanisms to safeguard the rights of women that are already in place in Sri Lanka, the Government has developed a national action plan for the promotion and protection of human rights, which has been approved by the Cabinet of Ministers. The national action plan contains a specific section dedicated to the rights of women, covering a plethora of issues. The priority area on women in this new mechanism focuses on enhancing and strengthening the rights of women through proactive measures. Currently, the national action plan is at the implementation stage. It characterizes the Government's commitment to promoting and protecting human rights, especially those relating to women.

In addition, His Excellency President Mahinda Rajapaksa appointed the Commission of Inquiry on Lessons Learnt and Reconciliation in May 2011, which heard testimony in many parts of the island, especially in the former conflict-affected areas. The Commission submitted its report in November 2011 and, subsequently, it was introduced in Parliament on 16 December 2011. It is now a public document. The report offers detailed observations and recommendations on international humanitarian law issues and on grievances, in particular those of women, relating to the final phase of the conflict.

While the Government will continue to adopt social, economic and security measures relating to women and children, which also have relevance to the Commission's findings, courses of action will also be taken in response to the Commission's recommendations. The Government finds the Commission's suggestions regarding institutional mechanisms to deal with land documentation and user-right issues to be valuable, as the resolution of competing equities of land titles in the former conflict-affected areas is strikingly complex.

Sri Lanka has had a very constructive engagement with the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict. We appreciate the open and transparent manner that has been adopted by the Special Representative's Office in working with Sri Lanka on this important issue. In this area, too, reporting from the field must contain verifiable information that would enable Governments that are committed to sincerely addressing issues of sexual violence in post-conflict situations to investigate and

provide redress to the affected. It is equally important that monitoring missions do not confuse common criminal activity with such gender-based violence. Such a distortion would smack of politically motivated targeting of Member States.

Sri Lanka stands ready to extend its support to achieving gender parity in United Nations peacekeeping activities and in carrying our gender-related mandates of the peacekeeping missions. Necessary predeployment training has been completed to deploy an all-female battalion comprising 855 personnel and 28 female officers, at any time.

Sri Lanka is happy to note that the issue of women and peace and security continues to receive the attention it deserves in the Security Council and in the Secretary-General's reports. We congratulate Ms. Margot Wallström and her staff on the effective work that they are doing to assist women and children in conflict situations. It is unquestionably our collective responsibility as Member States to ensure a world free, safe and fair for all women and girls.

The President (*spoke in French*): I now give the floor to the representative of Spain.

Mr. De Laiglesia (Spain) (*spoke in Spanish*): Spain welcomes today's thematic debate on women and peace and security, and specifically on sexual violence in conflict, which is a priority issue for my Government. We appreciate the presidency of Togo's initiative in holding this debate, and we hope that the Council will continue addressing the issue regularly.

We also thank the Secretary-General for his report on Conflict-related sexual violence (S/2012/33) and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict, Ms. Wallström, for her briefing. We endorse the recommendations in the report and we fully support the work and mandate of the Special Representative, as established in resolutions 1888 (2009) and 1960 (2010), as well as that of the Group of Experts on the Rule of Law and Sexual Violence in Conflict.

Spain associates itself with the statement made by the observer of the European Union. I will only make some brief observations in my national capacity.

In recent months, in application of Spain's national action plan on resolution 1325 (2000) and other associated resolutions, we have engaged in several activities, especially in the area of training, that

I wish to highlight. We are firmly convinced that training is an essential aspect of our efforts to prevent sexual violence in conflict.

First, last November the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation and the Ministry of Defence organized, together with the Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Defence of the Netherlands, the second offering of the international pilot course on the gender perspective in peacekeeping operations, which took place in The Hague. The purpose of the seminars is to promote the inclusion of the gender perspective in all peacebuilding activities and to ensure specific training of personnel participating in those missions. We plan to continue to offer the courses every six months, alternating between the Netherlands and Spain.

Moreover, in order to raise the profile of gender advisers and ensure the inclusion of the gender perspective in peacekeeping missions, the Ministry of Defence of Spain organized a course in late October 2011 on the gender perspective in operations, with conferences for members of the armed forces on equal opportunity, setting norms on gender issues, and the fight against rape and sexual violence in conflict.

The next course for high officials in peacekeeping operations, to be organized in coordination with the United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations and held in May in Kigali, Rwanda, will deal specifically with the issue before us today, with particular emphasis on the fight against sexual violence in conflict.

My Government is currently conducting its third review of the national action plan on women and peace and security, incorporating the recommendations contained in the Secretary-General's reports and in the resolutions, statements and decisions of the Security Council, especially those relating to sexual violence in conflict. My delegation welcomes the fact that the members of the Security Council have also been able to reach agreement on this important issue.

Finally, I again thank the Special Representative for her words and for her work. We hope that her work and the work of her Team of Experts, together with UN-Women, in cooperation with all other actors, will help to cement the commitments needed to finally put an end to sexual violence in conflict. We hope that the Council will continue to regularly invite the Special Representative to provide updated information on the progress of her important mandate.

The President (*spoke in French*): I now give the floor to the representative of Botswana.

Mr. Ntwaagae (Botswana): I would like to extend the gratitude of my delegation to you, Mr. President, for convening this important meeting on women, peace and security. We also thank the Secretary-General for his very incisive report (S/2012/33) submitted in accordance with resolutions 1820 (2008) and 1888 (2009).

Today's deliberations reaffirm the great importance that we individually and collectively attach to the need to address sexual violence in the context of armed conflict, as well as its impact on women and children. Our deliberations also provide an opportunity for us to take stock of what has been achieved and to identify gaps and challenges that still remain in addressing this scourge.

As stated in the report of the Secretary-General, we note with satisfaction that reasonable progress has been made to date in the implementation of resolutions 1820 (2008) and 1888 (2009), as demonstrated by the notable efforts made by the United Nations system, Member States, civil society and other actors, including the Secretary-General's Special Representative on Sexual Violence in Armed Conflict and the United Nations Action against Sexual Violence.

However, we remain deeply concerned about the persistence and rising levels of sexual violence that still persist in some countries. Women and girls continue to be targeted, while rape and violence, including sexual violence, continue to be used as weapons of war. According to the Secretary-General's report on conflict-related sexual violence, the past year has seen several new and ongoing armed conflicts where sexual violence was widespread and, in some instances, may have been systematically aimed at civilians. Mass rapes of women and girls were also witnessed. That is despite repeated condemnation of those inhuman acts by the Council's resolutions 1820 (2008), 1888 (2009), and 1960 (2010), which became beacons of hope for millions of women and girl victims worldwide.

While recognizing that national justice systems may be significantly weakened in conflict and post-conflict situations, we realize that inaction could send a wrong message, namely, that sexual violence is tolerated. We therefore call upon all concerned to refrain from such human rights abuses, and instead to

promote respect for international humanitarian law and non-violent forms of conflict resolution, and to cultivate a culture of peace.

The importance of demonstrating our commitment and political will to prevent sexual violence, combat impunity and enforce accountability by prosecuting those responsible for perpetrating such crimes against civilians cannot be overemphasized. In addition, we wish to stress the importance for States, with the support of the international community, of strengthening efforts to implement the policy of zero tolerance for sexual violence, and to increase access to health care, psychological support, legal assistance and socio-economic reintegration services for victims of sexual violence, in particular in rural areas, taking into account the specific needs of women and children, including those with disabilities.

Botswana sincerely commends the efforts of the Secretary-General to address the underrepresentation of women in formal peace processes. To that end, my delegation welcomes the inclusion of women in peacekeeping missions in civil, military and police functions. We also recognize that their presence may encourage women from local communities to report acts of sexual violence and other human rights abuses. In addition, efforts by national and international actors to engage women and to address gender issues in the context of combating conflict-related sexual violence must be accelerated. More concrete action should be taken to ensure that that is done. We believe that effective steps to prevent and respond to acts of sexual violence can significantly contribute to the maintenance of international peace and security.

Botswana attaches great importance to the protection and promotion of the rights and advancement of the status of women. The Government has made considerable achievements in protecting women from all forms of violence and in ensuring a safe and secure environment where their rights are protected. In addition, it has undertaken several initiatives to address violence against women and children. Ending violations of women's human rights is therefore a moral imperative, and one which we must collectively combat. In that regard, Botswana strongly condemns all forms of violence against women and children and supports all efforts aimed at preventing and eliminating violence, including sexual violence against women and children.

In conclusion, we remain optimistic that, given our collective will as Member States, especially in the Security Council, we can bring an end to those despicable crimes.

The President (*spoke in French*): I now give the floor to the representative of Armenia.

Mr. Nazarian (Armenia): Allow me first to express my thanks to you, Mr. President, for convening this debate. Armenia fully supports the Security Council's recognition of the need to take effective measures to address conflict-related sexual violence. We welcome the recent report (S/2012/33) of the Secretary-General. My delegation also welcomes the presentation of Special Representative of the Secretary-General Margot Wallström, and we commend her tireless efforts and leadership. We are also grateful for the informative statements made by the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations and by Ms. Megheirbi.

Today's debate addresses an urgent matter. More and more, we are witnessing a disturbing trend in the use of sexual violence as a political and military tool, the effects of which are grave and long-lasting, often alienating entire communities. Although conflict-related sexual violence is not a women's issue, it is a known fact that a disproportionate number of victims of such violence are women and girls. Sexual violence affects all aspects of women's lives, compromising their well-being, security and basic human rights. It further exacerbates the inequities that women face and, in so doing, it threatens peace, security, development and post-conflict peacebuilding efforts. As such, addressing sexual violence demands a multilayered approach and requires involvement on the international, regional and national levels. We must identify the crime and bring those responsible to justice.

During the past decade, particular attention has been paid to addressing some of the specific crimes experienced by women and girls during armed conflicts, namely, rape, trafficking, enforced prostitution and enslavement. It is critical to ensure accountability for past and present crimes, and to not grant immunity to perpetrators. Otherwise, we would be providing amnesty for future crimes. In that regard, Armenia is encouraged by the report of the Secretary-General, which for the first time includes an annex that lists the parties credibly suspected of committing or

being responsible for patterns of rape and other forms of sexual violence in situations of armed conflict on the Council's agenda. Such reporting and systematic data collection are critical, because crimes of sexual violence remain underreported due to stigmatization and fear of reprisals. We hope that such measures will promote accountability and that they will provide timely and reliable analyses based on which the Security Council can carry out its responsibility to protect civilians from conflict-related sexual violence. We cannot address sexual violence, however, by simply naming and punishing offenders. More fundamental changes are needed on institutional and societal levels as well.

This week we will commemorate the tragic events that took place in Sumgait, where civilians were killed and horrendously sexually violated just because they were Armenian. However, the focus of today's debate is conflict-related sexual violence in situations on the Council's agenda. It is our firm belief that the effectiveness of the work of the Council and its members arises in large part from its ability to focus on the agenda. It is unfortunate, then, that one representative used this debate, as inappropriate as this may be, as a forum to voice accusatory grievances with regard to the killing of civilians in Khojaly. As we tackle the important issue of conflict-related sexual violence, we must remain accurate, reliable and, most importantly, focused on the objective at hand in order to enhance protection and achieve effective results.

In conclusion, although important steps have been taken towards our common goal of preventing and effectively responding to conflict-related sexual violence, much remains to be done. Armenia remains committed to working closely with the Council, the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and the other relevant United Nations bodies toward this noble end.

The President (*spoke in French*): I now give the floor to the representative of the Sudan.

Mr. Osman (Sudan) (*spoke in Arabic*): I would like to thank you, Mr. President, for convening this open debate on the subject of women and peace and security. Twelve years have passed since the Council adopted resolution 1325 (2000) on this issue. A global plan of action has been adopted in connection with the resolution, along with normative indicators to gauge

progress and a timeframe for achieving objectives at the regional and international levels.

The Sudan began taking steps to enhance the status of women as far back as 1954. Sudanese women participated in the first Sudanese Parliament in 1954. That early achievement was carried forward, with women serving as full-fledged members of the next Sudanese Parliament in 1964 as well. Building on that trend, the Sudan has applied the principle of equal pay for equal work since 1967.

Yet more gender-related legislation has been enacted since then. For example, the principle of gender equality in pension age was established in 2003. The status of women took a qualitative leap forward in the domain of political participation in 2008, when an election law was enacted stipulating that women must hold at least 25 per cent of the seats not only in the Sudanese federal Parliament but also in all 10 state Parliaments. In the Sudan, there is a federal Parliament in the capital city of Khartoum and there are 10 state Parliaments, one in each of the 10 federal states. Twenty-five per cent of the membership of all these parliaments is held by women through direct, free elections.

We cherish and take pride in that progress in the Sudan. It indicates the importance we attach to promoting the status of women in our country. The Vice-President of the federal Parliament of the Sudan is a woman, and a full 66 per cent of our civil service is composed of women, making men a minority in the service. In the judiciary, there are 80 female magistrates, some of whom have become Supreme Court justices. In the field of diplomacy, many women have taken on the title of Ambassador and represent the Sudan in many of our diplomatic missions.

On the basis of these examples and this short introduction to the progress we have made in enhancing the role of women in the Sudan, let me now move on to the main focus of our discussion here today. We reject and stand firm against all practices of injustice and violence against women. In 2007, we adopted a national strategy that was developed in consultation with all relevant official and civic bodies, including governmental entities and representatives of civil society, including the civil society representative who sits on my right side here today. We appreciate her role in this regard.

The national strategy adopted in the Sudan encompassed six areas of focus for measures to enhance and upgrade the status women, including peacebuilding and the preservation of rights, participation in decision-making, economic development, education, health, the environment, and dispute settlement. The strategy has been applied at all federal and state levels. The Government of the Sudan has established numerous specialized centres at all levels to coordinate the efforts of women in the fields of peace and development and to provide opportunities for consultation on promoting gender equity and the principles of equality.

I would also like to note that specialized national disarmament, demobilization, reintegration and resettlement programmes in the Sudan give special priority to the situation of women, in coordination with the relevant United Nations agencies. We take this opportunity to acknowledge in particular the valuable collaboration we have had with UN-Women and that agency's role in translating the contents of the aforementioned plan of action into reality.

Today's debate on the subject of women and peace and security has included a presentation of the Secretary-General's report on sexual violence in conflict (S/2012/33). Among the 20 States it mentions, the report also refers to my country. I wish to say the following in response.

We welcome the reference contained in the report to the Doha Document for Peace in Darfur, describing it as a step forward in the comprehensive peace process in Darfur.

As is well-known, Darfur is one of the regions of the Sudan that is affected by conflict. The report includes a call on the non-signatory movements to cease hostilities and join the forward march towards peace. I mention this for the benefit of those who are unaware that violence against women in Darfur is fundamentally and actively caused by the armed movements that are intent on preventing the establishment of peace and security in Darfur. To camouflage those facts, they sometimes dress in military uniforms in order to convey the erroneous perception that the official military is responsible for perpetrating such violence.

We had expected the report to reflect the calm security situation and the decrease in violence, although that reality had been previously reflected in

reports of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations presented at various meetings of the Security Council.

Paragraph 54 of the report contains a reference indicating that some of those who perpetrate violence against women, as I mentioned, have been dressed in military uniforms. That reflects an inaccurate perception that can only be dispelled by unambiguously confirming that the perpetrators belonged to armed rebel movements.

Last year, the President of the Republic of the Sudan, Omer Hassan A. Al-Bashir, invited a number of heads of State and Government, senior national officials and officials of international organizations to celebrate the inauguration of the Transitional Authority in Darfur — the successful result of the peace accords signed in Doha. Clearly, that development has contributed to the calm situation. The Security Council must now send strong signals urging the movements to join the promise, and punish those that refuse to join the march towards peace in the Darfur area.

Last month, there was another positive development with the Sudan's establishment of its national human rights commission. A woman with more than 30 years of judicial experience was appointed commissioner. A special court was also established in Darfur. A prosecutor general was appointed to examine all alleged violations perpetrated in Darfur since 2003, including violence against women. That is also a concrete, positive development. All of the perpetrators of violence against women will be brought to justice in fair trials, and will be punished accordingly.

In conclusion, I would like to say that the situation of women in armed conflict is inextricably connected with the coordinated and integrated tackling of the root causes of conflict. We therefore reiterate the need to address the root causes of conflict. The Security Council, as custodian for the concept and maintenance of international peace and security, must address the root causes of conflict, and not only the obvious manifestations. War is war — whether it erupts due to economic reasons or natural disasters — and it affects the most vulnerable and the poorest members of society, including women.

In that connection, we appeal to the Council to bring further pressure to bear on the armed rebel movements in Darfur, Blue Nile and Southern Kordofan states to accept the principle of negotiation

with a view to achieving a permanent solution through peaceful means, as the Government of the Sudan has agreed to do as it endeavours to achieve a solution.

We hope that the measures to be taken by the Council will rely on the country reports presented by States, as well as accurate information contained in the periodic reports of the Secretary-General, and not on reports produced by certain mass media sources or by non-governmental organizations. In that regard, we encourage the United Nations and its missions to organize workshops and direct consultations with officials of conflict-affected States, with a view to exchanging expertise on matters relating to the situation of women in armed conflict.

The President (*spoke in French*): I now give the floor to the representative of Tunisia.

Mr. Jerandi (Tunisia) (*spoke in French*): I would first like to congratulate you, Mr. President, for your initiative in organizing this important open debate on women and peace and security. I also thank the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict and the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations for their excellent statements.

My delegation appreciates the opportunity to participate in this debate. We reiterate Tunisia's longstanding commitment to promoting gender equality and women's empowerment, especially in relation to conflict situations, as well as our determination to properly implement the goals of resolution 1325 (2000), of which my country was one of the authors. Tunisia continues to be profoundly convinced that peace, development and democracy will not be achieved without women's participation as powerful actors of change.

We particularly wish to highlight the importance of replacing the image of women in conflict situations as humiliated, marginalized victims — with an image of active partners in the process of conflict prevention, mediation and resolution.

It must be recognized that there has been growing awareness of the many forms of violence against women in conflict situations and of the threats that such violence poses to their security, their health and their ability to actively participate in peace processes. It is important to give women, who are the first victims of violence in all its manifestations, a primary role in

peacekeeping and peacebuilding, and it is even more important and urgent to do so in the process of conflict prevention.

It is also clear that Security Council debates have led to significant normative innovations, in particular the appointment of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict, the deployment of women's protection advisers within peacekeeping missions, and the operationalization of the Team of Experts on the Rule of Law and Sexual Violence in Conflict. They must receive the financial assistance necessary to enable them to help countries develop comprehensive national strategies to combat violence against women.

Tunisia, for its part, has begun to implement a plan of action for the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000), which, *inter alia*, encourages the training of women in the area of peacekeeping and peacebuilding, in order to be able to deploy qualified personnel to United Nations missions in the field. It is intended in particular to improve predeployment training, with particular stress on special measures to protect women against all forms of violence.

It is clear, however, that despite the progress achieved, violence against women in armed conflict persists, as is reflected in the most recent report (S/2012/33) of the Secretary-General on conflict-related sexual violence. This is a reminder that a great deal remains to be done in order to achieve all of the objectives set out in resolution 1325 (2000), and that it is very important that the Security Council remain seized of this issue and take additional, vigorous measures aimed at strengthening the protection of women in armed conflicts.

National ownership of the relevant resolutions of the Security Council remains the best way to ensure their effective implementation. In that context, it is up to States, first and foremost, to take the coercive and awareness-raising measures necessary to resolve the problem. Civil society organizations should also contribute significantly to strengthening the protection of women in that context, with a view to making it possible to amplify the voices of women victims of violence, break the silence on their suffering, and support the awareness-raising initiatives taken on their behalf.

Convinced of the urgent need to put an end to impunity for such heinous acts, Tunisia, which acceded

to the Rome Statute recently, a few months after the revolution, believes that it is crucial to further promote international cooperation and assistance so as to strengthen, *inter alia*, the capacities of Governments to develop national early-warning systems aimed at preventing an escalation of violence against women. It is also imperative that they investigate and prosecute the perpetrators of such acts, in accordance with the responsibilities incumbent upon them by virtue of their accession to international human rights and humanitarian law instruments.

Dealing with this issue is a reminder to us of the tragic situations facing women in many conflicts and crises around the world. Women are the first to be caught up in the turmoil of flight and internal displacement and confined, usually with their children, to refugee camps, where their situation is most precarious.

In Africa — a continent that, unfortunately, is afflicted by many crises and conflicts — many thousands of women are affected by the ravages of war and crises of all kinds. The debate on this issue also brings to mind the situation of Palestinian women, who are systematically oppressed as a result of the Israeli practices in the occupied Palestinian territories and the occupied Syrian Golan. A Palestinian woman aged 60 today would have since birth known only the abuses of the occupation, spending her entire life crossing checkpoints, fleeing bombings and burying and mourning the dead. Such women and many others must serve as an impetus for the Council to take urgent action so that they can live in dignity and simply realize their rights as human beings.

To conclude, I wish to reiterate that my country remains at the disposal of the United Nations in the context of any action relating to the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) and of other international instruments aimed at strengthening the full participation of women in the decision-making process and at ensuring a deep-rooted culture of human rights, as a fundamental guarantee of the elimination of all forms of violence against women.

The President (*spoke in French*): I give the floor to the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Mr. Mottaghi Nejad (Islamic Republic of Iran): I wish to thank you, Mr. President, for giving me the opportunity to take the floor at this late hour.

It was not the intention of my delegation to deliver a statement on this agenda item. But since the representative of the Israeli regime, in his statement this afternoon, once again digressed from the main discussion in the Council and levelled some allegations about my country, I ask your indulgence, Mr. President, so that I might say a few words in that regard.

The representative of the Israeli regime referred to the case of a woman in Iran. While my delegation strongly refutes the allegations concerning that young lady, I would like to mention that it would have been better for the Israeli representative to talk about the thousands and thousands of Palestinian women and girls who have fallen victim to the atrocities committed by his regime in Gaza and other occupied lands of Palestine.

I am sure that the members of the Council are aware of the case of a Palestinian woman who delivered a baby while being kept waiting for hours at a checkpoint by the occupying forces. I can cite many, many other cases of violations of human rights committed by that regime.

However, my delegation is of the belief that, in addressing the agenda item under consideration here, we should stick to the main issues at hand. The Council is not the proper platform for the representative of a regime whose occupying forces have violated the basic human rights of millions of people, including women and girls, to preach to us about human rights.

I know that the hour is late, but I deemed it necessary to reply to the childish allegation that was made.

The President (*spoke in French*): I now give the floor to the representative of Azerbaijan to make a further statement.

Mr. Musayev (Azerbaijan): First of all, I would like to apologize for asking for the floor again. We thought that it would be inappropriate and counterproductive to pass over the comments made by the representative of Armenia and his attempt to mislead the Security Council in silence.

It seems that that Member State was the only one among today's speakers that overtly tried to justify, in the course of our deliberations, acts of systematic and widespread violence committed against civilians, including women and girls. I am confident that a careful reading of the relevant international documents

would convince the representative of Armenia next time to refrain from taking the floor and making irrelevant comments.

The arguments of the Armenian side are particularly astonishing as they are made in the Security Council, which, in 1993, adopted a series of four resolutions condemning the use of force against Azerbaijan and the occupation of its territories and demanding the immediate, full and unconditional withdrawal of Armenian occupying forces from all occupied territories of Azerbaijan (resolutions 822 (1993), 853 (1993), 874 (1993) and 884 (1993)).

Another aspect of the problem that the representative of Armenia prefers not to mention at all is the determination of the Security Council with respect to the impact of Armenia's aggression on the civilian population.

Lastly, the aforementioned resolutions made specific reference to violations of international humanitarian law, attacks on civilians and bombardments of inhabited areas. It is beyond dispute that such acts, together with violence against women and girls, amount to war crimes, crimes against humanity and racial discrimination. It is also indisputable that, as an occupying Power, Armenia bears direct responsibility for the commission of those offences.

Accordingly, what the Armenian representative attempted to describe in his statement has been unequivocally qualified by the Security Council, the General Assembly and other international organizations as the illegal use of force and the commitment of other crimes of serious concern to the international community.

The President (*spoke in French*): I now give the floor to the representative of Israel to make a further statement.

Mrs. Furman (Israel): The accusation about Israel that the representative of Iran made today insulted the intelligence of everyone in the Chamber. That regime has zero credibility.

Iran represses its own people, as it helps other tyrannies to slaughter theirs. As we have seen recently in Georgia, India and Thailand, Iran is the world's central banker, chief trainer and primary sponsor of terror. The Security Council clearly denounced those attacks today in its press statement (see SC/10556).

Iran provides sophisticated weapons to Hamas, Hezbollah and other terrorist groups in the region and around the world. In Iran, the Ayatollah regime represses its own people, as it helps other tyrannies to butcher theirs. In his last briefing before the General Assembly, United Nations Special Rapporteur Shaheed offered a chilling picture of how daily life in Iran looks. His report highlighted:

“a pattern of systemic violations of ... fundamental human rights ... includ[ing] multifarious deficits in relation to the administration of justice ... practices that amount to torture ... the imposition of the death penalty in the absence of proper judicial safeguards ... the persecution of religious and ethnic minorities, and the erosion of civil and political rights”.
(A/66/374, para. 18)

I could go on but, due to the late hour, I will leave it at that.

The President (*spoke in French*): I now give the floor to the representative of Armenia to make a further statement.

Mr. Nazarian (Armenia): Having followed the discussions that evolved in a very constructive manner, which is to be particularly appreciated given the participation of countries that are not often in agreement with each other, one cannot but regret the continuation of the policy of repeating an unchanged rhetoric by the delegation of Azerbaijan.

The reference to the so-called military aggression of Armenia is totally misleading. The resulting situation is a reaction of the people of Nagorny Karabakh to Azerbaijan's own decision to use military force to suppress the legitimate, just and peaceful quest of the people of Nagorny Karabakh to exercise the right to self-determination, guaranteed by international law and the United Nations Charter.

Also, the references to the four resolutions 822 (1993), 853 (1993), 874 (1993) and 884 (1993) on the Nagorny Karabakh conflict are a clear attempt by Azerbaijan to read those resolutions and apply them selectively in a partial and self-serving manner. Indeed, Azerbaijan is itself in violation of those resolutions, which urge the parties concerned to pursue negotiations within the framework of the Minsk Group of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), as well as through different contacts

between them. Azerbaijan's refusal to engage in direct negotiations with the elected representatives of Nagorny Karabakh is one of the main impediments to the resolution of the conflict referred to by the representative of Azerbaijan.

Meanwhile, what the Azerbaijani representative failed to acknowledge is that Armenia has done exactly what the Security Council resolutions called on Armenia to do some 18 years ago, that is, to use its good offices with the leadership of Nagorny Karabakh to help find a peaceful solution to the conflict.

I would like to stop at this stage. I think that my comments are more than enough for the representative of Azerbaijan to understand that the Council is respected for its serious exchanges. A meaningful exchange on the Nagorny Karabakh issue is within the format of the OSCE Minsk Group.

The President (*spoke in French*): I call on the representative of Azerbaijan to make a further statement.

Mr. Musayev (Azerbaijan): Again, I apologize for asking for the floor. It is curious, to say the least, that the representative of Armenia, the country that bears the primary responsibility for unleashing the war against Azerbaijan and committing other serious international crimes during the conflict, takes the floor in the Security Council and tries to lecture the victim of aggression.

The Government of Armenia, which has purged both the territory of its own country and the occupied areas of Azerbaijan of all non-Armenians, and thus succeeded in creating mono-ethnic cultures there, should be, in our view, the last one to speak on such notions as peace, human rights and the self-determination of peoples.

As far as the reference to the Nagorny Karabakh region of Azerbaijan is concerned, I should recall that the Security Council has recognized that Nagorny Karabakh is part of Azerbaijan and reaffirmed respect for the sovereignty, territorial integrity and inviolability of the international borders of Azerbaijan.

We consider the stance of Armenia as an open challenge to the conflict settlement process and a serious threat to international and regional peace and security.

The earlier the officials of that country understand the lack of any perspective in their unconstructive and dangerous political agenda, the sooner our people will be able to benefit from peace, stability and cooperation.

The President (*spoke in French*): I call on the representative of Armenia for a further statement.

Mr. Nazarian (Armenia): I apologize for keeping the Council at work at this late hour, but I have asked for the floor again to exercise my right to make a further statement after hearing the brazen attempt by the representative of Azerbaijan to distract the Council's attention from the reality on the ground by shifting the responsibility for its own militaristic actions and ceasefire violations on others, whom it spares no effort in portraying as aggressors.

It is deeply disappointing that, even after its election to membership of this responsible organ of the United Nations, Azerbaijan continues its irresponsible practice of putting the blame on others in order to hide its own crimes and provocations. Unfortunately, this has become a regular exercise for Azerbaijan. It is unethical to deliver such defamatory statements in the Council, which serve no other purpose than to shatter the hope for peaceful coexistence between peoples.

Rather than deliver such an appalling statement as a propaganda tool, Azerbaijan should focus, as I said earlier, on cooperating with the co-Chairs and missions of the Minsk Group of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, and do its part in conducting the investigation pursuant to the statement issued by the Armenian, Russian and Azerbaijani Presidents at their Sochi meeting in March 2011.

The Azerbaijani side should realize that such cheap shots and statements are not only unconvincing, but are shameful and will not be tolerated by this body.

The President (*spoke in French*): The Council has before it the text of a statement by the President on behalf of the Council on the subject of today's meeting. I thank the Council members for their valuable

Council agree to the statement, which will be issued as a document of the Security Council under the symbol S/PRST/2012/3.

It is so decided.

I call on Special Representative Wallström to make a further statement.

Ms. Wallström: I wish simply to make two short remarks. First, I thank the presidency for steering this meeting, and all members of the Security Council for what I think has been a very serious, constructive and principled debate. If any issue should unite us, it is this one.

I have also heard one word used by every speaker throughout this discussion. It is the word "prevention". We cannot prevent armed conflict when it is already ongoing, or widespread or systematic sexual violence that has already begun. If we are to deliver on the promise of prevention, we cannot fail to monitor, undermine or delay our response. The best impact that the Council can have is to give united political support to our efforts to prevent conflict-related sexual violence. I am not here to expand my mandate. I am here to do a good, effective job that brings added value to the Council's deliberations.

I thank the Council for the presidential statement that it has just adopted. I can promise that I will continue to cooperate with all members, and I hope for their continued support. Finally, I want to say that we have taken a principled approach in reporting systematic patterns, as distinct from isolated incidents of individual criminality. We have been disciplined in our focus on sexual violence that is linked to the maintenance and restoration of international peace and security. We will continue to do so.

The President (*spoke in French*): There are no further speakers inscribed on my list. The Security Council has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 7 p.m.

contributions to this statement. In accordance with the understanding reached among the members of the Council, I shall take it that the members of the Security